THE ART OF CLOTH IN MUGHAL INDIA

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THE ART OF CLOTH IN MUGHAL INDIA

Sylvia Houghteling

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Page ii, Detail of fig. 2.2.
Page iii, Detail of fig. 1.8
Page iv, Detail of fig. 2.19
Page x, Detail of fig. 2.15B
Page xi, Detail of fig. 2.14
Page xii, Detail of fig. 1.1A
Page 26, Detail of fig. 1.23
Page 70, Detail of fig. 2.26
Page 150, Detail of fig. 4.1
Page 184, Detail of fig. 5.1A
Pages 217–18, Detail of fig. 1.21
Page 238, Detail of fig. 3.20B
Page 256, Detail of fig. 1.1

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For my parents

CONTENTS

viii
NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

1
INTRODUCTION

27
CHAPTER 1 Landscapes of Cloth in the Mughal Empire

71
CHAPTER 2 The Tell-Tale Textile:
Fabric and Emotions in Mughal Hindustan

105
CHAPTER 3 The Moving Walls of the Amber Court

151
CHAPTER 4 The Fame of Machilipatnam Cloth

185
CHAPTER 5 The Flowering of Mughal Textiles in Britain

211
CONCLUSION

– – –

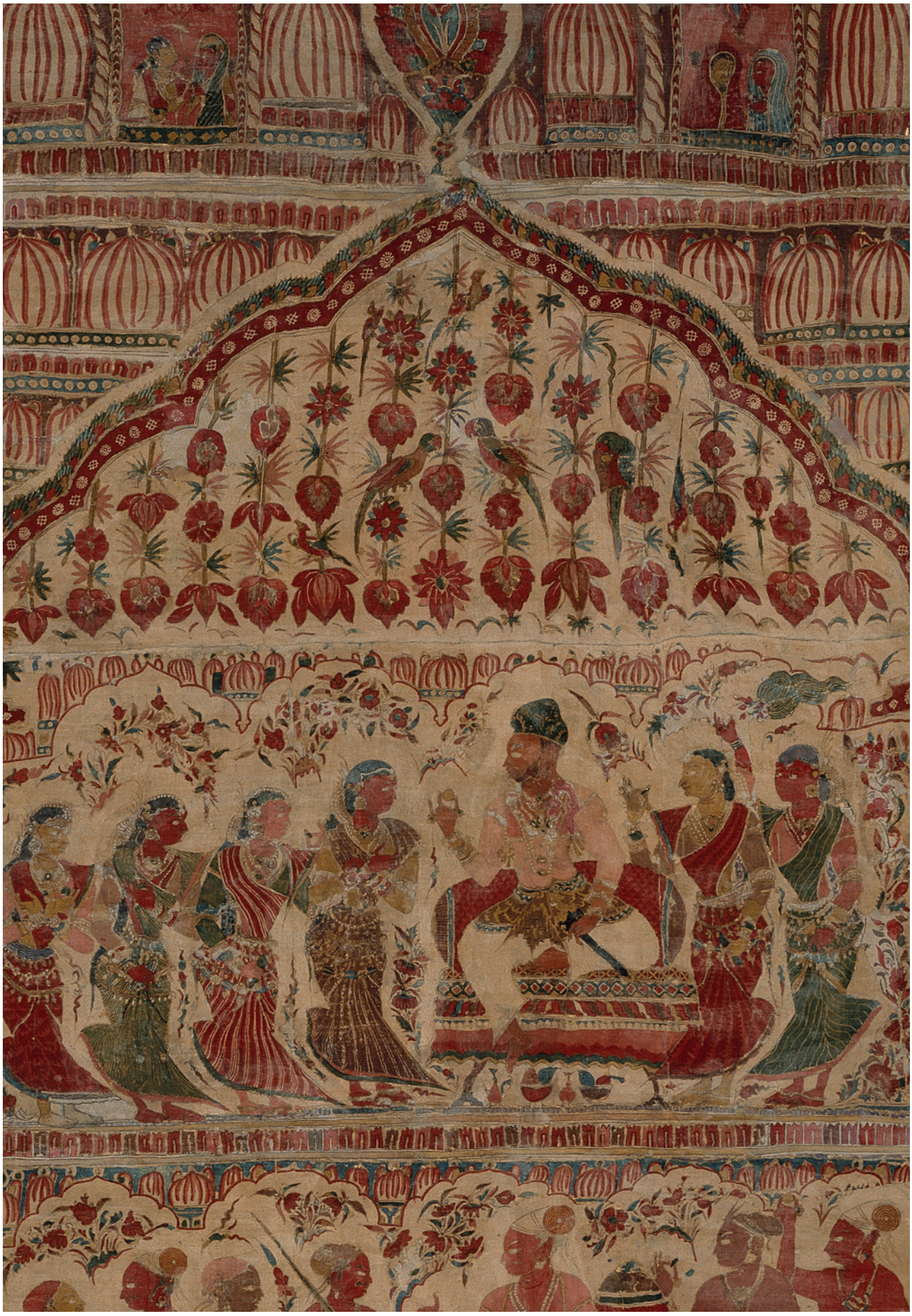
219
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

224
NOTES

239
BIBLIOGRAPHY

257
INDEX

268
IMAGE CREDITS



Note on Transliteration

In this text, I have followed the spellings found in John Platts's *A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi, and English* and Francis Steingass's *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*. I have adopted a limited system for diacritics, using them only to denote long vowels, and have retained the hamza and ʿayn. Place-names are given their standard English-language spellings, as are most names of historical figures.

INTRODUCTION

At the start of the seventeenth century, a nobleman in India hung a monumental textile measuring nine feet tall by twenty-four feet wide around the perimeter of a courtyard or high-ceilinged hall. The textile, now held in the Brooklyn Museum and divided into seven hangings, depicts a chattering world framed by waving palm trees and topped by pointed domes (fig. I.1a).[1] It is a world populated by women in saris and men in open-necked shirts, by hunters in leaf skirts, by attentive dignitaries with fin-shaped head ties, by African musicians in feathered hats, by European traders in ballooning breeches, and by Persianate or Central Asian noblemen in robes that cross at the chest (fig. I.1b).

By one interpretation, the hangings are windows onto a world clad in Indian cloth, for in their geographic diversity, the hangings uncannily represent the distant reaches to which South Asian fabrics traveled in the early modern period. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Indian textiles flourished as a bartering currency at Southeast Asian spice markets and were deposited in dowries and preserved as precious heirlooms in Indonesian, Malaysian, and Thai collections (fig. I.2).[2] Merchants carried cloths from Gujarat to consumers along the Arabian Peninsula and the Swahili Coast, where they were used as hangings, for sashes, as robes, and as turbans.[3] Starting in the seventeenth century, consumers in Japan tucked South Asian cotton cloth, called *sarasa*, into linings for robes and belts and used it to wrap precious objects such as scroll boxes and tea bowls (fig. I.3).[4] In Batavia, now Jakarta, the wives of Dutch traders, who called cotton cloth *sits*, sewed Indian cotton into shirts, gowns, and children's jackets (fig. I.4).[5] In the latter half of the seventeenth century, English merchants began trading in this painted cotton fabric, which they called "chintz."[6] The cotton was cool on the skin, it was easier to wash than silk, and the dyes were color-fast. The traded textiles folded into and reshaped the sensory and visual culture around them. Carried by sea and on long-standing overland trade routes, these textiles created a wide network tied together by a desire for cotton cloth.[7]

Yet for early seventeenth-century visitors to the nobleman's hall, the hangings may have also represented the inward pull of South Asian fabric. The textiles depict the faces of foreigners who came to coastal southeastern India through the maritime trade in things like nutmeg, elephant tusks, rubies, saltpeter, and stallions (see fig.I.1b). The figures on the cloth could therefore be seen as a compendium of local inhabitants and recurrent visitors, as well as a document of the diversity of people drawn to India's maritime entrepôts in the early modern period.

This monumental textile reminds us that the demand for South Asian fabric brought change and movement across different scales.[8] On the small scale within artisan communities, the drive to produce textiles created disruptions and opportunities in cloth-makers' lives as artisans migrated locally between their villages and sites of patronage closer to the coast. At the regional level, textiles carried the ecological peculiarities and floral rarities of South Asia's diverse geography between princely courts and the Mughal imperial center. On the largest scale, textiles drew ships thousands of miles

FIG. I.1A Hanging, 7 pieces. Coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, 1610–40. 108¼–109¼ in. (275–277.5 cm) × 37¾–40 in. (95.9–101.6 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Museum Expedition 1913–1914, Museum Collection Fund, 14.719.1 to 14.719.7.

to India's shores. The historical frame of reference must be flexible enough to address networks of varying scales and to find agency in small and large events, in artisan practices and long-distance trade, in minor fluctuations and broad trends.

The Art of Cloth in Mughal India focuses on the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century overland circulation of textiles within South Asia before moving outward to consider global trade. Using diverse source materials—small-scale Mughal paintings, courtly and popular poetry, Gujarati stock-lists of descriptions, Persian travel narratives, and royal inventory records—this book crafts a new account of cloth as it moved among the Mughal imperial courts, to the kingdoms of Rajasthan, to the Deccan sultanates, and, far beyond, to the British Isles. The cultures of textile making and textile collecting at these sites were sophisticated in taste and cosmopolitan in orientation. Yet in each setting, local figures developed unique frameworks for understanding textiles based on the cloth's texture, the exoticism of its origins, and the intimacy of its use.

The book encompasses the geographic territory that roughly corresponds to the regions conquered or at least held in fractious submission by the Mughal Empire by around 1700. Objects such as the Brooklyn Museum textile that were likely made in regions further south are also included in this study because the craftsmanship that they represented drew patronage from the Mughal imperial family and other princely courts to the north. If we are to describe this geographic region how it was understood by many of its inhabitants and its rulers in the seventeenth century, we should properly call it not "India" but "Hindustan." Although as Manan Ahmed Asif has shown, the term and idea of Hindustan had largely been lost by the twentieth century, the Muslim rulers of the

FIG. I.1B Details.

FIG. I.2 Canopy or ceremonial hanging with patchwork design. Coastal southeastern India, made for the Indonesian market (Java). Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, seventeenth century. 148 in. (376 cm) × 84⅓ in. (214 cm). Banoo and Jeevak Parpia Collection, Ithaca, New York.

FIG. 1.3 *Sarasa* bag for hanging scroll box. Cloth: coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, seventeenth or eighteenth century. Bag: Japan, Edo period. 3⅖ in. (8.7 cm) × 6⅝ in. (16.0 cm). *Edo Kaleidoscope*, Miho Museum, 2014, cat. no. 112, p. 120. Private collection, Japan.

FIG. I.4 Two baby jackets. Cloth: coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed. Jackets: the Netherlands, embroidery with metal threads, 1750–1800. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, BK-KOG-54 and 55, on loan from the Koninklijk Oudheidkundig Genootschap.

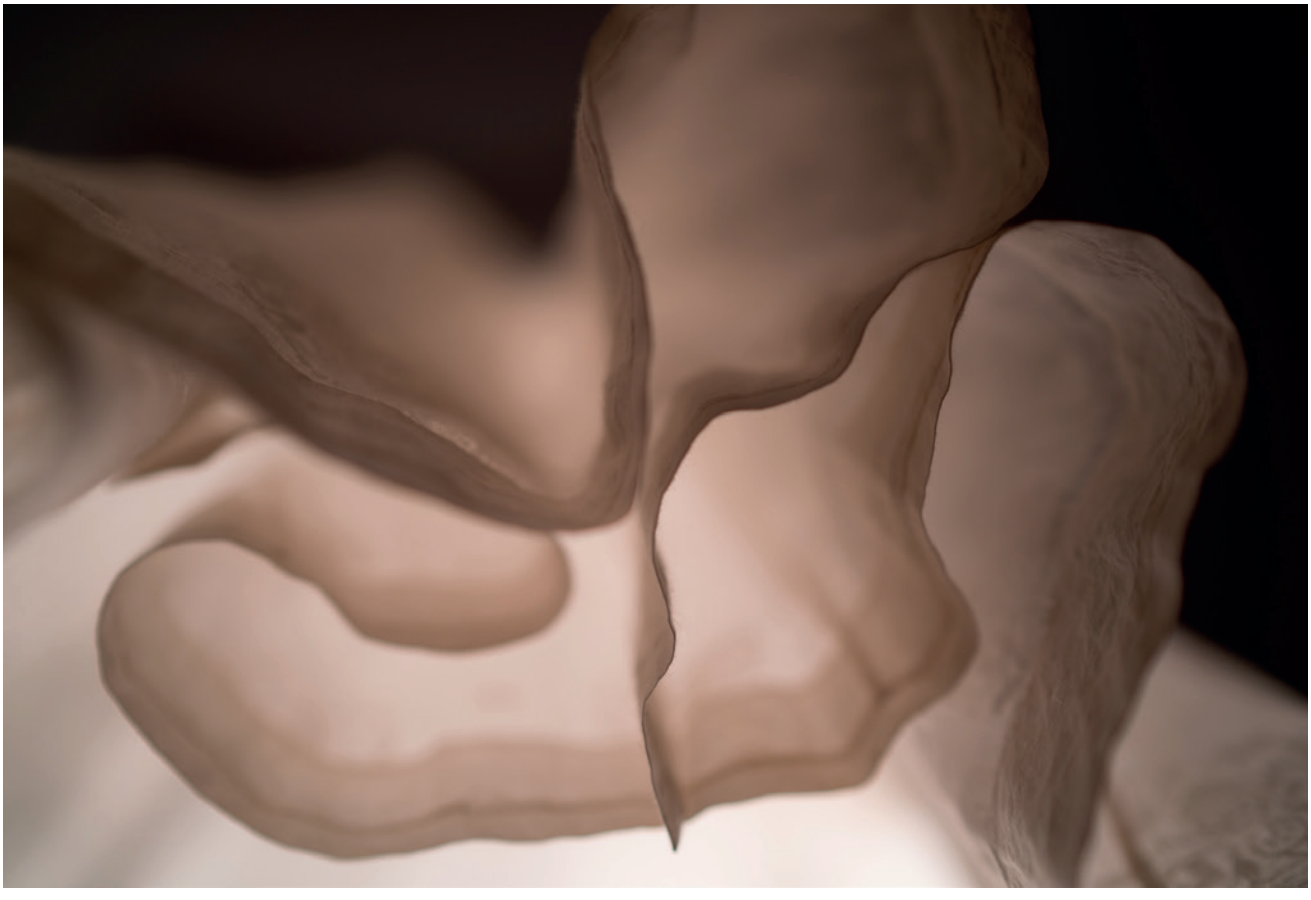


FIG. I.5 Muslin cloth. Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2015. Drik Picture Gallery and the Bengal Muslin Project.

Mughal Empire understood themselves as the Shahanshah-i Hindustan, the kings of kings of Hindustan.[9] While I have deployed contemporary terms, such as "India" and "South Asia," to refer to this geographic region, the breadth of "Hindustan" better encompasses the lands where textiles were made and circulated, including present-day Lahore, Pakistan, where monumental carpets were woven, and Dhaka, Bangladesh, the source of the very finest cotton cloth.

During this sixteenth- to eighteenth-century period there existed in Hindustan an "art of cloth" that is distinctive from theories of fashion or a linear history of textiles and dress. In this moment, encounters with textiles exceeded routine, utilitarian, or even status-related questions of display that are the primary uses to which we think of cloth as being directed. The phrase "the art of cloth" can mean many things. It refers to the making of textiles: the arts of dyeing, weaving, and embellishing cloth with prints and embroidery; and also the ways that cloth entered the allied arts of painting and poetry as washes of color, and as sources of puns and metaphors. The art of cloth encompasses the actions associated with using textiles: the arts of dressing and of fashioning the body; the arts of furnishing a space for a feast. Finally, this study takes the textile as an active subject and asks what cloth itself does: what it makes its wearer feel, how it occupies space, which images and memories it conjures in the mind. For these reasons, *The Art of Cloth in Mughal India* is not only about the aesthetics and techniques of cloth and cloth-making but also about the artful ways that textiles shaped the social, political, economic, religious, and aesthetic life of early modern Hindustan.

This book considers two types of textiles: garments that are worn and furnishings that are suspended from the walls or spread on the floor. The primary purposes of garments and furnishings seem obvious: clothing covers and adorns the body, and, on a social level, it communicates identity, affiliation, or rank. Textile hangings and carpets are both decorative and utilitarian—they enliven blank walls and floors but also provide shelter from rain and the sun or warmth and insulation for interior spaces. However, in the chapters that follow, we find textiles operating beyond these conventional roles. Clothing began to evoke the natural world, express political and personal feeling, and span the distance between diverse peoples and places. Textiles simulated forms of sensory experience, ranging from the feeling of humid weather to intimate, personal touch. Gossamer shawls and floral carpets conjured the climatic conditions of remote parts of the empire (fig. I.5). Garments participated as actors in Mughal political life, building upon their traditional role as robes of honor as they became vehicles to express personal sentiment or political mistrust. Monumental hangings with imagery of built structures and figural scenes temporarily masked local architecture to create novel social spaces.

In the poetic imagination of the period, for example, a cotton cloth from Bengal was analogous to the fine dews of early evening, while a lustrous silk replaced the smooth skin of a lover's body. When a rich man enjoyed a peaceful night's sleep, he imagined it as a "velvet sleep," dense and soft in texture like the cloth.[10] The Mughal emperors sent shawls of downy pashmina to their trusted noblemen to approximate the hand of the ruler on the vassal's shoulder. Textiles covered over dry, desert forts, spreading verdant carpets of silk and wool flowers in gardens that saw few blooms.

This account includes textiles that were primarily valued for their materiality—for the soft feeling of their textures and the warmth of their pile—but also fabrics with large-scale figural imagery, like the hangings that opened this introduction, whose visual interest draws them closer to paintings. On the one hand, textiles with or without figural content share physical properties: their drape, their supple texture, and their mobility as items that can, for the most part, be folded, rolled, and carried. Yet figural textiles offer more immediate possibilities for interpretation, and they were abundant in the seventeenth century. In this study, I argue for the importance of bringing together material, visual, and cultural analysis in approaching textiles of the past. To fully grasp the workings of an art of cloth, we should attend to the materiality of painted figural textiles and recognize the visual importance and potential for meaning in what might otherwise seem to be lush but solely ornamental textile surfaces.

Past Histories of Cloth The past decades have seen increasing scholarship on textiles, much of which has focused on globalization and the role of Indian textiles in expanding and connecting distant economies.[11] Recent museum exhibitions have taken the global model as their starting point to explore the impressive mobility of objects ranging from ceramics and lacquerware to tea and textiles in the early modern period.[12] Indian cotton textiles are celebrated as the inspiration for a wide range of designs and innovations. Global art histories by their nature trace the story of the long-distance trade and recover the faraway consumer's perspective (often European) on what constituted "exotic" objects in this period of increased travel and exchange.[13]

The export trade in Indian cloth, while vast and lucrative, constituted a relatively small part of the domestic economy; even in the period of high trade in the eighteenth century, the circulation of cloth within Hindustan far exceeded that which traveled abroad.[14] In the field of South Asian textile history, scholars have studied the cloth trade in its regional, Indian Ocean context and have reasserted the importance of researching the diversity of Hindustan's very specific, local textile traditions.[15] Beginning in the 1950s, John Irwin began to analyze the South Asian textile trade on a more granular level, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Calico Museum of Textiles in Ahmedabad became important centers of scholarship.[16] In subsequent years, the publications of Steven Cohen, Rosemary Crill, Jasleen Dhamija, and Rahul Jain, along with the work of many other historians, conservators, and museum curators, have opened up new understandings of the iconography and aesthetics of cloth, as well as the histories of dye materials, weaving techniques, and methods of loom construction.[17] The research of Moti Chandra and Chandramani Singh recovered vital literary and archival materials.[18] Together, this scholarship integrates technical analysis with visual interpretation and contextualizes cloth objects in South Asian art and history.

This study carries forward the focus on local production, not only for reasons of historical precision but also because seventeenth-century textile makers and consumers knew that the local ecology, including water composition, air humidity, and soil minerals, determined the color, fineness, and texture of a locality's cloth. However, at the same

time, this study takes from the global model the importance of mobility. Knowing the richness of regional specialties in textiles, consumers sought out fabrics from across the Mughal Empire. Cloth crisscrossed these spaces, carried in chests, bales, and reed tubes by bullock and riverboats from Assam to Machilipatnam. I combine in this study a sensitivity for the resolutely local practices of textile production with insights derived from cloth's mobility, for it is only at the bounded and yet still fluid range of what could be transported across Mughal realms that we can come close to holding in our minds these two vital traits of textiles at once.

Textiles and Politics in Mughal India The seventeenth century in South Asia marked a fertile time for the economic and artistic development of textiles. The years from approximately 1550 to 1700 saw vast urban expansion, increased trade, and relative social and political stability. In 1526, the historic capital of Delhi and much of North India were conquered by Babur, the founder of the Mughal dynasty, a lineage of Sunni Muslim rulers descended from the Central Asian emperor Timur and from Genghis Khan. Emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605) and his successors, Emperors Jahangir (r. 1605–27), Shah Jahan (r. 1628–58), and ʿAlamgir (also known as Aurangzeb, r. 1658–1707), expanded the Mughal Empire throughout the seventeenth century. In the early modern period, the Mughal Empire competed with its rivals, the Ottoman Empire, the Uzbek khanates, and particularly the Safavid Empire in present-day Iran, for dominance over territory and trade in West and Central Asia.[19] The end of the seventeenth century brought considerable turmoil and change after prolonged wars in the Deccan, incursions by Maratha forces, and the proclamation of independent regimes by members of the Mughal nobility.[20]

With the support of the Mughal imperial court and regional elites, the textile industry expanded in the seventeenth century, constituting the second-largest sector of the domestic economy after agriculture.[21] The adoption of new weaving technologies and the growth of silk production led to a leap in the sophistication and diversity of textile products.[22] Increased imperial wealth from land revenues, an escalation in the export trade, and the patronage of urban and rural consumers stimulated the production of high-quality luxury textiles.[23] The security of the Mughal Empire allowed overland trade to flourish, and the increase in maritime commerce with Southeast Asia, West Asia, the Middle East, eastern Africa, and Europe expanded markets for Indian goods.[24] From the sixteenth to eighteenth century, Hindustan was responsible for more than one-quarter of total manufacturing throughout the world.[25]

Moreover, by the end of Emperor Akbar's reign in 1605, the Mughal Empire ruled over a population of close to 110 million out of a total of approximately 145–150 million people on the subcontinent.[26] To put this figure in context, the population of the whole of Europe in 1600 was close to 78 million, a little over half the size of the total population of South Asia.[27] The French population, the largest in Europe, numbered 20 million people. Scholars would regard a study of "European textiles" in the seventeenth century as a capacious topic, full of cultural, religious, and aesthetic variation. The size of the

subcontinent's total population, almost twice that of Europe, reaffirms the significance of studying the movement of textiles throughout South Asia's diverse communities.

The Mughal domain stretched from the edge of Central Asia to eastern Assam and, by the end of the seventeenth century, to the southern region of the Deccan, an east-to-west distance nearly as great as the span between London and Moscow (fig. I.6).[28] Noblemen and imperial officers were expected to serve long tours of duty in the military and as governors in provincial territories, far from their families and hereditary kingdoms. Merchants, artisans, and laborers became more mobile as the relocation of the court and constant military campaigning brought opportunities and disruptive warfare to regions throughout South Asia. Estrangement from home, and from the imperial courts in Delhi, Lahore, and Agra, became a central theme.[29] With the vastness of the Mughal Empire's geography, textiles began taking on new meaning within political and social life. As courtly chronicles and popular poetry attest, textiles became signs of conquered territories and a means by which the feel of the faraway lover, the climate of a homeland, or the demands of the emperor were carried to remote parts of the empire, to regional allies and foes.

FIG. I.6 The Mughal Empire.

FIG. I.7 Timur holds audience in Balkh on the occasion of his accession on 12 Ramadan 771/April 9, 1370. Likely Herat. From the *Zafarnāma* of Sultan Husayn Mirza, 82 v. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1467–68. Page: 9 1/16 in. (23 cm) × 6 in. (15.2 cm). Painting: 7 in. (17.9 cm) × 4 5/16 in. (10.9 cm). The John Work Garrett Library, The Sheridan Libraries, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Gar. 3 c. 1.

In early modern Central and South Asia, textiles were also an indicator of healthy governance, reinforcing the importance of cloth at the nexus of art and politics. The Mughals, descended from the Timurid dynasty, modeled much of their self-representation on the example of the great Central Asian emperor Timur. Crucial to the performance of Timurid identity was the continuation of nomadic practices, such as living in tents, despite having built permanent stone and brick palaces.[30] As the Timurid painting in figure I.7 shows, tent constructions were elaborate and multilayered, combining utilitarian structures with decorative figural textiles. Timurid legend had it that settling down in Hind, as they called it, would lead to an emperor's downfall.[31] The Mughal emperors continued to be mobile rulers, a practice made possible by a monumental apparatus of tents, carpets, and wall hangings—essentially a textile architecture.[32] While the tent had dynastic symbolism, it was also a matter of political expediency for the emperor to move throughout the empire. Carla Sinopoli writes that "the shifting capital may be seen as a mechanism for dealing with the fluidity and near-constant conflicts that characterize many imperial societies, as well as the logistical difficulties inherent in ruling over very large and diverse

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polities."[33] The mobility of the imperial camp provided a link to Timurid ancestors and a means of governing a vast, heterogeneous realm.

The lands known as Hindustan welcomed an influx of people from Iran, Central Asia, and East Africa during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, some of whom were brought by force and others who were drawn to the wealth and economic opportunity of the Mughal and Deccani courts and to the mercantile vivacity and relative religious tolerance of the empire.[34] As the rulers of Safavid Iran tightened their political control, and multiple wars with the Ottoman Empire threatened the economy, travelers arrived from Persian-speaking lands, including poets, painters, and carpet weavers, along with horse traders, Sufi devotees, and learned administrators.[35] These immigrant communities brought expertise but also clothing styles that permeated the Mughal court. In a manner that parallels what Mana Kia has described as the cultural continuities across the broader Persianate, or Persian-speaking, realms, inhabitants from early modern Iran, Central Asia, East Africa, and Hindustan consumed textiles in ways that defied geographic boundaries or their territorial origins.[36] A cosmopolitan courtier could display the correct manners (*adab*) or move between languages when traveling; so too could elements of courtly dress be altered or replaced, particularly because prevailing styles of untailored shawls and multiple waist-ties afforded many opportunities for literal layering. As Finbarr Barry Flood's work on medieval South Asia demonstrates, the use of textiles and garments often confounded present-day distinctions based in religious identity, social status, and the meaning of courtly display.[37] Moreover, unlike their Ottoman contemporaries, the Mughal rulers did not establish sumptuary laws or impose regulations on non-Muslim dress.[38] In a period of pluralism, when place, affiliation, and identity generated overlapping affiliations, Mughal clothing styles allowed for the simultaneous expression of many homelands.

Textile History in the Shadow of a Commodity That such a light material as cloth could occupy such a weighty role in the early modern world seemed paradoxical even in the seventeenth century. In 1696, an English merchant wrote of India's gauzy, yet expensive, muslin textiles: "Fashion is truly termed a witch—the dearer and scarcer the commodity, the more the mode. Thirty shillings a yard for muslins, and only the shadow of a commodity procured."[39] The merchant's lament deserves consideration. That the insubstantial cotton cloth could cost thirty shillings was an outrage to the merchant when what was obtained was not a thick piece of wool but only a "shadow of a commodity." Of course, it was precisely because Indian muslin had the weightlessness of a shadow that it was so costly. It was not the muslin's material heft but its diaphanous texture, spun by the finest spinners, that earned its prestige.

The tension that the merchant identified between the economic value and the material qualities of cloth also has relevance for writing the history of textiles. Finely made fabrics were certainly commodities traded on the open market. Unlike raw materials, however, their value was not determined solely by their volume but by complex assessments of aesthetics, rarity, and fashion, as well as their often costly materials. As Giorgio Riello has noted, part of cotton's success in Europe was that it could be at once a luxury

and a commodity, at once aspirational and utilitarian.[40] Writing an art history of textiles does not require a denial of the economics of cloth but an effort to contextualize all of the other means, besides market price, by which textiles gained worth in early modern society.

Textiles also run through the many different approaches to interpreting Mughal history and culture. In the latter half of the twentieth century, the study of the Mughal Empire was led by a group of historians, political theorists, and economists centered around Aligarh Muslim University.[41] The "Aligarh School" approach, based in Marxist theory, emphasized the bureaucratic and economic organization of the empire, focusing on price indexes, taxation rates, agricultural yields, and population growth to argue primarily for the extractive nature of the Mughal state.[42] Yet Irfan Habib, a prominent Aligarh historian, has written rich and nuanced accounts of the history of the Indian textile trade and its technology.[43] He also incorporates poetry into his histories of technological advances. Habib notes that in one poetic couplet, a piece of wood was said to be dead until it was brought to life by becoming the stamp of a textile block-printer.[44]

Tracing the periodic confluence and conflicts between the economic and aesthetic value in textiles can be one of the most productive ways to access the art of cloth in the early modern era. Aligarh historian Shireen Moosvi's magisterial *Economy of the Mughal Empire c. 1595* calculated that the price of cotton cloth relative to wheat declined between 1595–96 and 1858–67.[45] The calculations that support this finding are outside the scope of this study; the significance of it lies well within. That the exchange value of cotton decreased between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries parallels the ways that the artistic and poetic meanings of cotton textiles diminished relative to other forms of art in the same period. Finding meaning in this economic narrative is part of the challenge of writing histories of objects that are a "shadow of a commodity." How can art history hold weight alongside the industrial history of textiles, whereby cheap, machine-made cotton cloth from Britain replaced homespun South Asian goods? How can cultural significance stand beside real changes in a weaver's ability to buy bread?

Cultural codes of dress, gifting, and patronage obligations have always coexisted with the commodity histories of textiles in South Asia. C. A. Bayly argued, for instance, that the political responsibility of the emperor to patronize textiles persisted outside of the market-based economy for cloth. He wrote, "The use of cloth as a medium for integrating the kingdom might precede, supplement, or even outlast the operation of tributary flows of money, and at no point did cloth become 'merely' a commodity, whose production and distribution was solely determined by market forces."[46] A cloth could be both a trade object and a politically expedient device. The cultural and political value of a textile could "precede, supplement, or even outlast" the monetary significance of a textile object.

Accounts of seventeenth-century South Asian history are not exclusively hard or soft, economic, political, or cultural. In addition to securing the foundation of Hindustan's economy, textiles operated in the aesthetic realm in a manner akin to architecture, painting, and literature, and as part of the wider cultural sphere. The Mughal emperors and their surrounding Rajput regional rulers used architecture as part of a nuanced

political language; their patronage of painting workshops expressed their governing acuity as well as their refined connoisseurship.[47] Related research on Mughal, Rajput, and Deccani support for courtly literature and music affirms the inseparability of cultural history from questions of politics and economics.[48] More recent art historical scholarship has uncovered new areas of creative production and has deepened historical understandings of kingship, alliances, courtly structures, and the negotiations of style that were necessary within a multifaith, multiethnic, and economically prosperous Hindustan.[49] Though usually overlooked as supplementary or merely ornamental, the art of cloth was foundational to these forms of aesthetic enjoyment and courtly entertainment, and worked to link together distant geographic spaces and to secure or unsettle hierarchical arrangements.

A History of the Art of Cloth Understanding Mughal history through textiles also alters our approach to Mughal arts and guides us to rethink the relationship between the textile medium and the history of art more generally. This study positions textiles as distinctive from other objects usually classified as the "decorative arts"—such as ceramics, lacquerware, and metalwork—but the model for thinking about textiles as interactive belongings can also be extended to objects made of a range of materials.[50]

Before the early modern period, South Asian art, religion, and philosophy had included an expansive role for textiles beyond the material or mundane. For instance, textiles inspired a group of medieval Indian realist philosophers to rearticulate their worldview. The existence of cloths dyed with many colors or woven with variegated threads posed for these philosophers what Phyllis Granoff calls "a challenge to any simple understanding of the world," because in these cloths unity of structure could coexist with a multiplicity of colors.[51] A twelfth-century manual on the practices of Hindu gift-giving suggests the importance of textiles in religious life, and in afterlives as well. The texture of an individual's clothing was an indicator of past good deeds: it was said that "men who give clothes to impoverished yogis gain soft, fragrant, heavenly clothes and are wafted by winds that smell as sweet as nectar."[52]

Recent scholarship in the history of European art has articulated further functions of the textile medium within the larger fields of art and architectural history. On a three-dimensional level, textiles are able to temporarily reconfigure space. Tristan Weddigen argues that the "fundamental contribution of textiles to princely display in premodern times" was their "power of transforming the interior into the exterior, the private into the public, and vice versa."[53] Elaborate garments also constituted a plastic art: garments in Renaissance Europe, Ulinka Rublack argues, were a form of "polychrome sculpting."[54] In the field of painting, Paul Hills has suggested that cloth could "conduct or quicken the narrative" of a work of art, expanding the reach of textiles from the spatial into the temporal.[55] Similarly, in early modern South Asia, monumental carpets and tents transformed the sandstone and marble Mughal architecture in front of which they hung; in the tailoring of densely woven silk that had been imported from the Safavid Empire, we see artisans sculpting garments that would keep their shape when worn on the body. And

in the unfurling of smaller-scale textiles to signal formal transitions in the course of a day, cloth became a way of marking and moving time.

Textiles also served as a means of aesthetic communication between distant geographic sites and cross-pollination among varied artistic media in the long-distance premodern trade that traversed Asia, Africa, and Europe. Mobile and highly coveted silk fabrics and wool carpets transmitted geometric and floral patterns, inscriptional styles, and figural motifs that reshaped the visual appearance of metalwork, ceramics, and architectural ornament and inspired poetic verses and even mathematical calculations.[56] Scholars of Islamic art in particular have focused on the "intermedial" and "transmedial" transfers that occurred between textiles and other art and architectural forms as artists sought to replicate material qualities of textiles, such as their drape, their sheen, complex folds, and fluttering orientation on a wall, in paintings and architectural decorations.[57] The pervasiveness of a textile aesthetic was never exclusive to Islamic art, however, and wide variation existed among regional and local artistic forms, and in the relationship at various times between textiles and allied media.[58] I build my argument for the art of cloth from the specific conditions of the Mughal Empire and neighboring, closely linked sites in the Safavid Empire and show that textiles in early modern Hindustan existed within and between the fields of architecture, sculpture, and more ephemeral areas of art, such as garden design and performance.

The history of cloth used for garments in the Mughal Empire inevitably intersects with the fields of dress and fashion history, areas of scholarship that have sought in recent years to encompass cross-cultural and comparative studies.[59] The history of South Asian courtly dress offers rich subject matter for these efforts given that the Mughal Empire absorbed styles of dress from throughout the Islamicate world, East Asia, and Europe, in the form of small hats or high boots. However, this book addresses additional questions, exploring new means by which studies of sartorial culture can expand our understanding of the material and conceptual worlds of the past.[60] In the chapters that follow, I point to ways that cross-cultural research on fashion and textile objects could emerge from studying the art of cloth in the Mughal Empire. I introduce the possibility that cloth carries with it a sense of its local ecology, and that textiles might be regarded as transformative, fluid, and perishable goods. I consider the emotional valence of cloth and how it retains memories and conveys warmth and affection. And lastly, and perhaps most central to this study, I foreground the differing sensory experiences of wearing diverse fibers, whether wild silk, fine wool, or shadow-thin cotton.

Sensory Histories of Cloth Textiles can be a ritual fabric, a marker of time, or a piece of art. Textiles also have a unique sensory importance. Cloth surpasses other media in the intimacy of its use. It makes a direct address to the senses in the way that it retains scent, in the texture of satin or crepe as it wraps around the body, and in the rustling sound of silk taffeta. By attending to experiences beyond the visual, *The Art of Cloth in Mughal India* recovers the sensory significance of cloth in the seventeenth century and the phenomenological and metaphorical meanings that were attached to textile objects.[61]

The history of writing about sensory experience is complicated by the fact that "untiring sensuality" was one of the most pervasive, and problematic, stereotypes of "the Orient" put forward by European scholars and travelers.[62] Colonial officials and early European social scientists proposed racialized typologies that placed cultures in a hierarchy based on their engagement with the senses, with the sense of sight as the most disembodied, civilized, and refined.[63]

Recently, scholars have reinstated the importance of bodily experience within cultural histories of the early modern world.[64] Important work has illuminated the long intellectual history of the senses in South Asia, affirming that the pleasures of the body were never incompatible with the sophistication of the mind. Sheldon Pollock's work on the philosophy of *rasa*, or aesthetic experience, recovers the sensory metaphor of *rasa* as "taste" or "flavor" as it relates to food, suggesting the possibility for a direct, bodily experience of art within classical Indian aesthetic theory.[65] Scholars of South Asian

FIG. 1.8 Shah Shuja as a child (detail). Attributed to Manohar, Mughal Empire. Folio from the Late Shah Jahan Album. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1620 (painting) and ca. 1650 (borders). 14 7/16 in. (36.7 cm) × 9 13/16 in. (25 cm). Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: The Art and History Collection, LTS1995.2.98.

history, art, and music, notably Daud Ali, Emma Flatt, Dipti Khera, and Katherine Butler Schofield, have shown that sensuousness and corporeality, far from being the signs of decadence that Europeans claimed, were integral to social relationships, courtly comportment, and the robust project of kingly rule.[66]

Writing on Mughal courtly culture has been enriched by more embodied histories of the imperial state and the social world of the court. The work of political historians has shed light on the corporeal practices of Emperor Akbar and his imperial servants, and on the bustling cityscape of Delhi, yielding a more socially diverse, locally inflected understanding of the Mughal Empire.[67] Within gender studies, historians have found in narratives written by Mughal noblewomen a way to return a sense of "flesh and blood" to the better-known court histories of the Mughal emperors.[68] Studying the historical presence of the physical body has yielded a more nuanced understanding of political formations and gender relations during the seventeenth century.[69] Textiles inescapably yield stories of people otherwise less visible in histories: while few women's or children's garments survive, inventory records detailing the huge volume of objects that entered the courtly collections serve as reminders of the many different kinds of bodies, beyond the figure of the emperor and his noblemen, who inhabited the Mughal world, such as the baby Shah Shuja, a son of Shah Jahan (fig. I.8).

Moreover, textiles, like the bodies they once clothed, were hardly fixed and stable over time. Textiles are more vulnerable to humidity, insects, and light than many other objects, and even in the seventeenth century, they were known to have a surprisingly fleeting life span. With the exception of jute and hemp, many textiles become moldy when wet for a sustained period of time.[70] Cloths traveling between India and Britain could become "spotted" and "rotten" during the journey.[71] Such accidents were less likely to happen at shorter distances. Like the melons and grapes that were harvested in the cool hills of Hindustan and sent to the dusty plains, textiles, dyed in turmeric and scented with rosewater, traveled with urgency along seasonal pathways to widespread courtly sites throughout the Mughal Empire. That textiles might be thought of as semiperishable products, and not as inert objects, has implications for our thinking about regional versus global trade.[72] A textile object that had been shipped halfway around the world was different in nature than a cloth consumed in the more immediate vicinity of its making.

Textiles in early modern South Asia were granted the privilege of changing and expanding while in an owner's possession.[73] While the deep red and blue dyes of madder, chay root, and indigo were expected to remain vibrant as long as the cloth itself, other colors were more short-lived. Pink, yellow, and red dyes made from the flowers of saffron and safflower were known as *kacchā* dyes, meaning temporary, raw, or unripe, and were prone to fade quickly.[74] Some cloths were described as "freshly dyed" and had a startlingly bright pink color.[75] Others were valued for their more subdued hues, like the color of a dying rose. That a textile's colors could be fleeting, like the painfully brief spring season in India, is captured in the spring festival of Holi. The Mughal emperors participated in the celebration of Holi, spraying colored water pigmented with red *kumkum*, saffron, safflower, and turmeric, which stained the white clothing of the Holi players.[76] Color on

cloth, like seasons of the year, could be understood as an ephemeral state of being. While textiles kept their freshness longer than fruit, and many have survived in storage for centuries, an acknowledgment of the temporal dimension of cloth focuses attention on the sensory experiences of its circulation. In a moment when global histories prevail, this underscores the value of looking at objects and their regional contexts up close.

Evidence for the sensory qualities of objects exists in the textiles themselves. Given their delicacy, however, few cloths from the seventeenth century survive; in the absence of the objects, the art of textiles can be partially recovered through texts. As Olga Bush and Margaret Graves have demonstrated recently, poets writing in Persian and Arabic imagined a linked relationship between literature and various crafted objects.[77] The relationship between texts and textiles was particularly close.[78] In the medieval and early modern periods, a figural language of textiles flourished in the writings of Persian poets, whose work circulated among the Persian-speaking elite of South Asia. These poets linked their craft to the work of weaving—the structure of the poem was the warp, while the metaphors, similes, and figures of speech were the embellishments added in the weft.[79]

Textiles also appear in more popular forms of poetry and in unadorned inventory lists. In the chapters that follow, I examine many types of texts that enumerate textiles—from the price lists of the cloths in Emperor Akbar's treasury to the couplets describing fabrics found in Rajput popular poetry. These all share a genre of the inventory—where textile names, pronunciations, associations, and prices are all that remain. I contend in this book that meaning can be made from these lists, even if the textiles they describe cannot be found. And in their overlap with lists of fruits and flowers, textiles emerge from these records as more akin to perishable goods than their identity as the consummate long-distance trade items would suggest.

One of South Asia's most beloved figures, the poet-saint Kabir, was born into a humble weaving family in the fifteenth century. Metaphors of textiles and weaving permeate his poetry and Kabir is often depicted in paintings weaving at a loom (fig. I.9). To this day, the best known of Kabir's devotional poems, which are often sung, presents the human body as a *jhīnī-jhīnī chadariyā*—a cloth (*chadariyā*) with a "subtle, subtle" (*jhīnī-jhīnī*) weave, crafted from the warp and weft of the mystic yogic veins. Elsewhere, Kabir uses the same word, *jhīnī*, to describe the sound of voices in the sky, or the feeling of breath, suggesting that the "subtlety" of this cloth gives it a texture like air.[80] Kabir writes that he "wrapped [the cloth] with such care" that he maintained it, while others—humans, gods, and sages—allowed it to get dirty.[81] In Kabir's poems, the body is often a clay pot, a garden, a fort, a city—all contained metaphors that enclose a space inside.[82] In *Jhīnī Chadariyā*, the body is the wrapping itself, the "subtle cloth" that is thin and fragile. Through his metaphor, Kabir conveyed the insubstantiality of life.

The poetic language of textiles also borrowed from the natural world in this period. Yet in a telling reversal, living gardens and birds—the actual flora and fauna—were given their highest praise when they were likened to luxury cloths.[83] In the seventeenth century, the Deccani poet Nusrati transformed the typical directionality of the textile metaphor: instead of using similes to liken fabric to the natural world (as in, "the cloth was as

blue as the sky"), it was the flowers and avian creatures that came to resemble fabrics. In Nusrati's 1657 Sufi love poem, the *Gulshan-i ʿIshq*, this kind of manufacturing metaphor brought to life a spring garden. As Ali Akbar Husain has shown, Nusrati made the flowers into the weavers of grand textiles. The garden was adorned with "fabrics and tapestries woven by flowering climbers that spread a velvety *mandap*, [or] canopy, above."[84] Nusrati fills this garden with birds who are dressed in the finest cloths of South Asia. A golden oriole (*pilak*) wears "yellow *pitambar* silk" and a brown shawl.[85] The bulbul wears a black sari with a red border. Nusrati writes that the red-headed merlin (*tirmiti*/

FIG. I.9 Kabir weaving with two attendants. Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, early eighteenth century. 18⅛ in. (46 cm) × 12⅜ in. (31.5 cm). The British Museum, London, 1920,0917,0.29.

turumtī) dons what might be a dotted tie-and-dye fabric, clothing the falcon in the pattern of a *bandhanī* cotton textile (figs. I.10 and I.11).[86]

The metaphor of a velvet garden and sari-clad birds—a natural world made by textile means—holds significance not only for histories of South Asian art and material culture; it is productive too for a truer understanding of global trade in the early modern period. Textiles made for the Mughal court absorbed novel flora and fauna circulating from the New World: pineapples abound, and a North American turkey cock can be seen parading among other birds on a small-scale cotton cloth. One Mughal velvet includes in its pattern what is likely an American chili plant, its thin red chilis glimmering as silk pile against a silver ground.[87] By the same measure, the millions of export textiles sent from Hindustan to East and West Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries did not shed their worlds entirely upon being packed into watertight chests. If the Deccan's springtime gardens can be understood as textiles woven by climbing plants, and the birds of Nusrati's imagination are actually clothed in holy yellow silk and tie-dyed cotton, then the South Asian textiles that fanned outward to global ports bore with them not just indelible dyes and lustrous threads but also the flowering vines of gardens and the feathered bodies of birds.

Structure of the Book The five chapters of this book reconstruct the exceptional role that textiles came to occupy in early modern South Asia: textiles partook in the bodily rituals of kingship and were reminders of the smells and textures of home; textiles helped provincial citizens understand distance and diversity; they inspired visions of the broader world linked together by maritime trade. To bring economic and political histories into conversation with the sensory and poetic dimensions of textiles is not

FIG. I.10 Red-headed merlin (*Falco chicquera*) in flight. Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Gujarat, 2018.

FIG. I.11 Textile with imitation tie-dye (*bandhanī*) pattern. Made in Gujarat; traded to Egypt. Cotton, plain weave, printed resist, dyed in indigo, ca. fifteenth century. 5¾ in. (14.57 cm) × 16⁹⁄₁₆ in. (42.03 cm). The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., 6.300. Acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1954.

simply a methodological choice I have made in this book: it is borne out in the archival and visual record too. Moving from the most intimate to the furthest flung, *The Art of Cloth in Mughal India* reveals the potential textiles held to mediate between the spiritual and the material, as well as the active presence of cloth in every aspect of courtly life.

The chapters of the book proceed in broadly chronological fashion from the late sixteenth century until the cusp of the eighteenth century. Although in the first two chapters the narrative recovers the relationship to textiles at the imperial court, this account moves beyond what Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam have critiqued as a "personality-centered" approach to the Mughal Empire that focuses exclusively on the succession of emperors.[88] Alongside the imperial rhetoric, I bring in the voices, names, and personalities of those outside of the court, including anxious officials, chatty merchants, activist artisans, and popular poets.

The first chapter begins early in the Mughal Empire, examining the period roughly covered by the reign of Emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605). The chapter surveys the landscape of cloth in the Mughal Empire using evidence from popular literature in Gujarat, the inventories of Akbar's court, and from contemporaneous paintings and descriptions of cloth. South Asia's distinctive ecology, its geographical range, and its cultural diversity yielded a varied array of textile forms and textures. As the Mughal Empire integrated various regions, cloth circulated more widely. Textile materials opened the way for political and religious compromises and allowed individuals to collect on their bodies materials from across the wide range of an expanding empire.

The second chapter examines the role that textiles played in political life under Emperor Jahangir (r. 1605–27). At a time when high-ranking figures in the Mughal court and the military were both mobile and widely dispersed, and when norms of sociability

and courtly pleasure linked Mughal spaces, courtiers and Emperor Jahangir himself used textiles to convey intimate feelings to those far away. The chapter offers an extended analysis of what is thought to be the earliest extant Mughal robe of honor. Using this garment with its figural patterns, the chapter shows how textiles that were sent throughout the empire engaged in a sophisticated play between absence and presence that connected allies and rivals across great distances.

The third chapter looks at the spatial role of textiles in constructing sites for courtly performance. It focuses on the regional court of Amer (known in English-language histories as Amber), whose rulers were positioned as high-ranking noblemen and trusted generals within the Mughal Empire. The textiles amassed by the Kachhwaha ruling family of Amber represent the most well-documented and best-preserved collection of textiles from seventeenth-century South Asia. The cloths offer an approximation of what might have lain in the actual imperial storehouses, which have been completely dispersed.[89] The chapter shows how these regional rulers created layered spaces that expressed the partial nature of their sovereignty. Moreover, studying a regional court instead of the imperial center allows for a wider view of how early modern Mughal society experienced textiles. The patronage of cloth was never solely top-down as thriving bazaar markets gave diverse merchants and consumers access to a wide array of textiles.

The fourth chapter studies how the political and cultural conditions of the seventeenth century reshaped the production of South Asia's most widely coveted textiles: the painted and printed cotton cloths made along the southeastern Coromandel Coast and exported from the port of Machilipatnam. The arts of bleaching and painting the cloths with dyes were so rooted in their natural environment that merchants and courtiers traveled great distances to procure them; this chapter presents new evidence that even the Mughal emperor's own agents traveled to Machilipatnam to commission cloths. I also track the differing scales of upheaval that occurred in textile history during this period, from the movement of artisans to escape famine and conquest to the jostle for goods that existed between foreign and semi-local merchants, as well as the courtiers of kings. The textile objects themselves demonstrate how much political, social, and artistic meaning can exist in a medium that has historically been situated as a decorative art.

The final chapter follows the path of Indian textiles to early modern Britain, where the seventeenth century was bookended by two female monarchs: Queen Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603), the founder of the East India Company, and the Glorious Revolution's Queen Mary II (r. 1689–94). While nuances were certainly lost in transit, imported textiles opened up the spaces of the home to novel textures and wondrous figures and flowers from abroad. Alongside the story of collecting, I examine female English embroiderers who incorporated both fabric fragments and decorative aesthetics from South Asian cloth into their work. I hold these textile examples, often blooming with floral imagery, alongside the history of the importation of actual (and highly fragile) flowers from Asia into English hothouses to consider both the possibilities and the limitations of transporting the freshness of cloth to distant places.

Together, the chapters of this book trace distinctive kinds of movement across the space of the Mughal Empire, from the travels of far-fetched textiles to the imperial

center (chapter 1), to the dispersal of imperial gifts, made possible by a postal system staffed by foot runners (chapter 2). The book proceeds to track a regional ruler who, though he served in nearly constant campaigns in the military, always deposited his textiles back home (chapter 3) and then turns to the smaller, but no less significant, movements of textile dyers and painters who relocated from sites close to favorable materials to other parts of the Coromandel Coast (chapter 4). When textiles traveled further abroad to Britain, the fabric inspired its female consumers to replicate the aesthetics of the Mughal textile world in other forms of cloth (chapter 5).

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The textiles under study in this book challenge accepted narratives of empire, the meeting of cultures, and the meaning of decoration. These objects operate outside of long-standing binaries and debates that are familiar in art history, including distinctions between the fine and decorative arts; between luxury and large-scale production; and between Mughal imperial production and regional, "sub-imperial" arts. This book demonstrates that regional objects were cosmopolitan in origin and influence but were also treasured by the imperial court for their unique materials and specific techniques of production.

The open relationship to objects cannot erase the inhumanity that coincided with a diversity in taste. There is a temptation to find in the freely moving, polyglot objects of the long-distance trade an escape from the violence of their political and social moment.[90] In the early modern period, textile makers and other artisans from Asia were taken by force or under exploitative conditions to sites as far away as colonial Mexico.[91] So-called "Guinea cloth" purchased by Europeans from India was reexported and sent to the west coast of Africa, where it was used as a bartering fabric in the terrors of the slave trade.[92] Except in rare cases, artisans in South Asia worked in conditions of economic insecurity and did not own land to cultivate food or control their own materials for production. The sophisticated global objects of this period emerged from a historical moment of extreme violence and inequality.

The art of cloth in the Mughal Empire can, however, help to balance a historiography still weighted toward Europe. The exchanges traced through the chapters of this book preceded the emergence of exotic, chinoiserie imagery in the eighteenth century, showing that Europeans were not the only people to have their eyes opened by a diverse visual and material culture. Innovative and luxurious textiles that moved throughout East Asia, Africa, and Central and West Asia allowed regional rulers in Hindustan access to a high level of cosmopolitan manufacture that was still largely unavailable in Europe. In repositioning the story of Mughal cloth as one of manufacturing dominance and artistic creativity rather than gradual impoverishment, and in recounting the rich political and poetic lives of textiles in South Asia, this book demonstrates that the global reach of Indian textiles was not the result of European imperialism but preceded it. Cloth had woven together an empire and imagined distant worlds long before Europeans crowded onto Hindustan's shores.

Chapter 1

LANDSCAPES OF CLOTH IN THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

Between 1561 and 1569, the young emperor Akbar issued four imperial edicts gifting land and revenue to Ustād Ramdas Rangrez. As his name suggests, Ramdas was an *ustād rangrez*, a "master dyer" who lived along the Yamuna River in the vicinity of the imperial capital of Agra.[1] While these edicts have been useful to historians of Mughal administration, what is particularly interesting here is the high status they accord to Ustād Ramdas Rangrez, who, at the time of the grants, had reached old age and been accused of insanity.

Emperor Akbar had an eye for color and was fastidious about cloth and cloth-dyeing. Within Akbar's imperial wardrobe, textiles were assigned a rank based on their hue. Akbar's historian, Abu'l Fazl, listed thirty-five colors, ranging in descending order from ruby-colored, golden, orange, brass-colored, grass-green, and sandalwood to bluish like China-ware, water-colored, and the less illustrious mango and musk.[2] The colors in Abu'l Fazl's list make reference to the flowers and birds of Kashmir and northern India, regions over which Akbar had steadily asserted control during the latter half of the sixteenth century. Cloths dyed a red color like the *ratanmanjanī* flower, which was found outside of Lucknow, were given a higher rank than those dyed a piercing blue like the *kāsnī* flower. Textiles the color of the cotton-flower, or the color of grapes and honey, outranked the pale gray color of the *fākhta* dove.

The logic behind the list of colors is somewhat opaque. The textiles in Akbar's inventories were first ranked according to the auspiciousness of a textile's date of receipt. They were then ranked by weight, with the lighter textiles given a higher rank, reflecting the relative value of fine muslins and other fabrics, which were often even more esteemed than those embellished with heavy gold or silver thread. Rankings based on color came next and may have pertained to spiritual questions, since Akbar followed his father's habit of changing the color of his clothes in accordance with the movements of the planets, a practice likely adopted from Mongol courtly traditions.[3] The ordering of the inventory suggests a sensibility that derived worth from a cloth's colors and textures according to aesthetic and poetic principles that transcended absolute measures of cost or the mystical dictates of stars. Indeed, it could be said that textile consumers in Hindustan developed what Michael Baxandall called a "period eye" for textiles.[4] Like the fifteenth-century Italian artists and art patrons that Baxandall studied, early modern textile connoisseurs recognized value in cloth and its attendant properties that are not apparent without further historical context.

In this chapter, I reconstruct the types of textiles that earned the appreciation and respect of patrons in Mughal lands.[5] By surveying the terrain of fibers and manufactured textiles that were available in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, I lay a foundation for subsequent chapters, in which I draw out meaning from specific types of cloth. Emperor Akbar and his successors were largely the inheritors, rather than the initiators, of a cloth tradition. For this reason, I have utilized Mughal documents with names and prices of textiles alongside Gujarati descriptive lists of cloth and have relied upon accounts of travelers and merchants as well as evidence for textiles in Mughal imperial paintings.

These documents suggest that the most valued cloths circulating in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries included not just fabrics woven from glossy mulberry silk and metal-wrapped threads, precious throughout courts in Europe and Asia, but also soft, felted mats made from goat hair and tent panels woven of honey-colored wild silk. In this chapter, I provide an extended analysis of garments woven from diaphanous cotton to propose the religious, political, and sensory advantages of this seemingly humble material in Mughal courtly life. Paintings from the illustrated *Akbarnāma*, the chronicle of Akbar's reign, corroborate this story and show how the ruler symbolized the process of incorporating new territories into his empire by donning the characteristic cloths of his conquered realms.

Out of this survey of cloth grows the chapter's most important point: the many distinctive textiles produced across the Mughal Empire yielded a uniquely place-based sense of cloth. South Asia boasted a wide range of textiles on two levels. First, it had many different types of fibers, which are the raw materials from which to craft cloth. Second, there existed a stunning breadth of techniques for manufacturing and decorating textiles, from dyeing recipes and weaving styles to forms of embroidery. The plants and animals needed for unusual fibers, such as short-staple cotton plants and pashmina goats, could only thrive in specific sites under the proper conditions of irrigation, soil composition, or open plains for grazing. The quality and mineral composition of the water inflected dye colors, while the thinnest cotton threads had to be spun in humid weather. Loom technologies and methods of preparing gold and silver wire were only known in certain parts of the realm. Cloths were often named for the places where they were made, whether these origins were fictitious or true. Over centuries, cloth types came to be produced in diverse parts of the realm, which loosened the connection between object and place; often the name was the only remnant of the geographic significance the textiles held for their consumers. A shifting feature of the "art of cloth," therefore, was the ability of a textile to conjure—in its name, its textures, and its feel on the skin—the sense of a specific or imagined place.

Cloth in the Records of the Early Mughal Empire Very few extant textiles can be securely dated to the early Mughal Empire, but textual and visual sources help to reconstruct an array of cloths. The *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*, or the *Institutes of Akbar*, the third part of Akbar's biography, written by the court historian Abu'l Fazl (1551–1602), contains granular details about the emperor's household and about the administration of the military, taxation policies, and territorial holdings in the final decades of the sixteenth century. The estimated dates of the compilation are between 1588 and 1598, thirty years into Akbar's reign and ending less than a decade before his death. The first volume of the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī* contains two chapters devoted to textiles: one on the emperor's wardrobe (*karkarāq*) and "stores for his mattresses"; the other is entitled *shāl*, the Persian word that gives English shawls their name. The chapters include descriptions of the textile products of India, explanations of Akbar's innovations in the textile sector, and then lists of textiles with their associated retail prices at the market.[6] The two chapters on textiles are located far away from the other sections on manufacturing, or even the lists of luxury

goods, gems, and metalware. Rather, the accounts of textiles follow sections on the autumn and spring harvests and the fruitery. Immediately before the textiles section is one on "flavors," including "the sweet, the bitter, the acid, the brackish," and a longer chapter on perfumes that includes recipes for different scents and extensive lists of sweet-smelling blossoms.[7]

The fact that Akbar's lists of textiles coexisted with records of perfumes and flavors echoes a genre of Indic texts that compiled names of textiles alongside catalogues of fruits and flowers. These early texts were classified as *varnaka*, or *varnanā*, a literary mode that can refer to purely descriptive sequences within classical Sanskrit drama as opposed to the more active, narrative content.[8] These descriptive passages also occurred in Buddhist religious texts and were composed in prose.[9] In other cases, *varnaka* texts were stand-alone prescriptive works that supplied "the order or arrangement of a song or poem" and offered a repository of poetic conventions for description. These works, which were particularly prevalent in Gujarat and in the Jain canon, provided either unadorned lists of words or a litany of similes that authors and bards could use to embellish their works with descriptions of kings, capital cities, or gardens in bloom.[10] The fourteenth-century *Varna Ratnākara* by Jyotirīsvara is one such text that combined Sanskrit with vernacular Maithili terms from the northeastern city of Mithila. The *Varna Ratnākara* contains certain similarities to the ordering of the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* as it progresses from foods and perfumes to fabric. The text includes words to use in describing the seasons and lists of gems, tents, and erotic terms. The section that precedes the lists of clothing enumerates thirty-six ways to bathe and shampoo the body with oils. Then, the *Varna Ratnākara* tabulates clothing types, "country stuffs," and fine textiles. After the lists of clothing, the author Jyotirīsvara compiled lists of different kinds of elephants (eight kinds), horses, garden shrubs, plants, birds, fruits, and flowers. The *Varna Ratnākara* spans the high and the low, the classical Sanskrit with the vernacular; it enumerates types of beggars and criminals, and it even records the sounds of shouts of people on the street.

Scholars of the *Varna Ratnākara* and other forms of descriptive texts have drawn a distinction between this type of literary list and the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, which, with its methodical accounts of grain and seed prices, resembles a "gazetteer with scientific and historical value."[11] The *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*'s exhaustive lists certainly bear similarities to later European imperial "gazetteers," a genre that sought to tabulate for officials the wealth and natural resources of the distant empire under the guise of science. At the same time, however, sections of the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* that contain lists of colors, descriptions of garment types, and references to the softness or lightness of cloth do bear a resemblance to ekphrastic genres of writing that detailed the visual abundance of a king's possessions. Moreover, like these earlier texts, the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* is attentive to sensory experience. Akbar was concerned with the smell of textiles, and the text details the use of dried "kewrah" (*kevra* or pandanus) flowers to give scent to clothing.[12] "Kewrah," used also in Ayurvedic medicine, has a scent like rose but with a fruitier tone and "smells even after it is withered. Hence people put it into clothes, [and] the smell remains for a long time."[13] The scent of *zabād* (from the civet cat) was also useful for giving fragrance to clothes and the body because, as Abu'l Fazl noted, "the smell will remain a long time in the clothes,

and even on the skin."[14] Moreover, the proximity in both the *Varna Ratnākara* and the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī* between the language for daubs of scented perfumes and lightweight shawls suggests a perception of textiles as bearers of ephemeral pleasures. The parallels between these documents are a reminder to listen more closely to the language of the *Ā'īn* for what the text might tell us about the lived experience of the Mughal Empire.

The relationship between cloth, perfumes, and food products also speaks to a particular kind of bodily immediacy that the Mughal emperors established in their empire. Collecting textiles from the peripheries of the realm allowed for a melding of the vast outside with the intimacy of the emperor's household. For long-distance consumers further away, items like food and textiles had to be packed in order to remain as flat, dry, and shelf-stable as possible. Only upon arrival did they undergo what Jennifer Roberts has called in the case of transatlantic trade "a drama of dimensional conversion, expansion, and enlivenment" as dusty tea leaves became elastic and fragrant in hot water; as rolled textiles became dresses; as "seeds inflate[d] into plants."[15] Mughal consumers

FIG. 1.1 Marriage festivities of Baqi Muhammad Khan. Outline by La'l, painting by Sanwala, Mughal Empire. From the *Akbarnāma*. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1590–95. 13 in. (33 cm) × 7⅞ in. (20 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Purchased from Frances Clarke, 1896. IS.2:8–1896.

received neither their fruits, flowers, nor textiles in such a lifeless manner but existed in a close enough relationship to have them fresh from within the bounds of the empire.

A description of a 1572 celebration held at the Agra palace of Akbar's *wazīr* (vizier or chief minister) gives a sense of the grand scale at which textiles were used in royal festivities, but also the blended sensory effects of scenting the air, filling a space with music, and unfurling textiles from distant places. Muhammad ʿArif Qandhari describes Emperor Akbar's processional to the *wazīr*'s palace: "The entire passage, measuring two thousand yards, from the royal palace up to his residence was decorated with various cloths such as *zarbaft* [gold weave], Chinese silk, European velvet, *atlas* [satin] and *kamkhab-i-Yazdi* [brocade from Yazd] for the emperor's steps."[16] This practice of spreading silk cloths for the monarch's horse to step over was known as *pāy andāz* (for the feet to step on).[17] These textile entry paths could stretch well over a mile long.[18]

Luxurious textiles cloaked the palace that the emperor approached and masked the permanent architecture behind it (fig. 1.1). "From all sides, the edifice was canopied with brocade and velvet. . . . Silken-curtains and coloured pillars with the entire ground . . . covered with the golden cloth by the decorators (*farrashans*). A large tent, made of felt cloth outside and brocade and velvet inside, was fixed there. The floor of brocade, velvet and silk was further decorated with rugs from Khurasan and Iran, with incomparable refinement."[19] The account mentions the work of the decorators in hanging and displaying the textiles, but it was the noblewomen of the Mughal Empire who were often tasked with the planning and procurement of these stunning arrays of cloth. Within the Mughal imperial household, Akbar's grandmother, aunts, and other powerful women arranged for the textile decorations, foods, and entertainment at wedding feasts and funerals.[20] Despite their absence in descriptions of imperial entertainments such as these, the female members of the nobility and imperial court hold presence in the scale and magnificence of the textiles on display.

Once inside the palace, the writer draws upon all of the senses in his descriptions. Visually, the scene was luminous, as "the walls were polished white with lime so [they] were shining like [a] mirror." Heavenly sounds came from male and female musicians playing "Khurasani music in the Hindustani style." The air was fragrant with "frankincense and aloe-wood in gold and silver fireplaces" and "the breeze [was] full of ambar and musk." The host offered "many varieties of delicious dry fruits and sweets." The entertainments were cosmopolitan—Khurasani and Hindustani music and "innumerable" kinds of food—but the textiles are described with the most precision.[21] Of the gifts presented to the emperor, Qandhari passes quickly over the "gold and silver articles" and enumerates: "the finest pieces of cloth such as *zarbaft* of Rum, velvet of Europe, *kamkhab-i-Yazdi*, *atlas-i-Khatai* of Bukhara, studded dupatta and turbans, Deccani jeweled boxes, golden thread of Gujarat and the royal muslin of Sunargaon."[22] The brocaded cloth comes from Ottoman lands, the velvet is European, the richly woven fabric is from Yazd in Iran, and the *atlas-i-khatāʾī* refers to the satin cloth of China but is made in Bukhara. From within the realms of the empire, Akbar received golden *zarī* thread from Gujarat. His "royal muslin" had traveled from the small but famous weaving town of Sunargaon in Bengal.

The quantity of textile possessions described for just this one night is almost unimaginable. Seven years after this festival, Muhammad ʿArif Qandhari reports the massive destruction of the kinds of decorative cloths that he described in 1572:

> In the first part of Rabi-ul-Akhir, A.H. 987 (by the end of May, 1579 A.D.) a terrible fire broke out in the premises of Farrashkhana at Fatehpur Sikri. It engulfed the imperial Shamiana (imperial canopies), Khargah (large and small tents), brocade and velvet curtains, atlas, silk, satin, and colourful embroidered cloth and varieties of carpets. The estimated loss was up to the tune of one crore [ten million] rupees. The emperor, however, did not notice it.[23]

A loss of nearly ten million rupees would imply that there were thousands of textiles in the decorations storehouse (the *farrāshkhāna*). The emperor's purported indifference to the loss is likely a rhetorical gesture, meant to alert the reader that these thousands of textiles in Fatehpur Sikri were only a fraction of the emperor's holdings in Agra, Lahore, and elsewhere.

Despite the grand scale on which the imperial court collected, however, Mughal records indicate that those who wore the cloths recognized the individuality of the items in their collections. Through the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, we glimpse the emperor wearing, designing, and even smelling and ordering the coloring of his textiles. We learn in these accounts that rather than being the undifferentiated trappings of his splendor, textiles were attributed to specific sites of production (the silks of Assam, the muslins of Sunargaon) and were appreciated for the precision of their colors, the subtle variations in their weight and density, and the enduring scents that clung to their fibers.

Textiles beyond the Imperial Court While fashion has historically spread outward from the imperial court and downward from the highest echelons of society, what came to be the dress of the Mughal court was crafted from Central Asian and Persianate styles but also incorporated regional textiles and garments that had long been in use in Hindustan. This can be seen in the garments that Akbar's historian, Abu'l Fazl, describes in the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, which combine preexisting styles with imported material, or foreign garments with local cotton and stitching traditions. When Abu'l Fazl listed the textiles in circulation, silk textiles tended to be given Persian or Arabic names, such as the word *zarbaft* from the Persian for "woven with gold thread" and *atlas* from the Arabic word for satin. In the Persian text of the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, Abu'l Fazl includes pronunciation guidelines for cloth names that would be unfamiliar to Persian speakers. He helpfully reminds his reader of what he calls the "Hindi" style of using "hidden" *he* and *nūn* sounds and instructs how one must emphasize the Hindi "t" for correct pronunciation of certain Indic words.[24] Given Abu'l Fazl's interest in lexicography and his transcription of Persian and South Asian vocabulary, the lists of textiles may have served a purpose beyond mere price calculations and statements of wealth; they also documented the wide variety of both imported and local names for cloth.[25]

Although Persian and Arabic names were typically used for silk textiles, this does not indicate that all silk textiles came from so far away. There is strong evidence for

FIG. 1.2 Hanging, known as the "*Vrindāvanī Vastra*" (detail showing Garuda; Krishna in the beak of the demon, Bakāsura; hiding the clothes of the *gopīs*; and dancing on the snake demon, Kāliya). Assam. Silk, lampas weave, sixteenth or seventeenth century. 368⅞ in. (937 cm) × 90⅞ in. (231 cm). The British Museum, London. Donated by Perceval Landon, 1905, As1905,0118.4.

sophisticated weaving in South Asia predating the Mughal period. The western region of Gujarat had historically been a center of fine silk weaving and the city of Ahmedabad continued in this role during the Mughal period. The *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* includes Gujarati velvet and gold-threaded silk textiles among the costliest fabrics brought into the imperial treasury. Abu'l Fazl writes that in Gujarat and Ahmedabad in particular, along with Lahore, Agra, and Fatehpur Sikri, "different kinds of figures (*taṣvīr*), patterns (*naqsh*), and weaves [lit. knots (*girah*)] and wonderful designs (*ṭarḥ-hā*), gained currency, and world-travellers, able to recognize quality products, were wonderstruck."[26] The most precious velvet, made with silk and metal-wrapped threads, remained the cloth from Yazd in Iran, but Gujarati velvet was ranked third only behind the Yazdi and European (*firangī*) cloth. Of the fifteen most valuable textiles listed in the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, three are specifically listed as coming from Gujarat, more than any other site of production, including Europe, Bursa, Lahore, Herat, and Yazd.[27] The high value of Gujarati silk textiles also indicates the fluid ideas of what was regarded as "foreign" or "imported," particularly early in the Mughal Empire. The Mughal military only conquered the Gujarat sultanate in 1573 and even after, Ahmedabad remained the most prosperous city of the Mughal Empire.[28] Thus despite its relative geographic proximity to Akbar's court in Agra, Ahmedabad could produce textiles that held an allure of something that, until recently, was made beyond the Mughal realm.

A number of sophisticated, loom-woven silks from the fifteenth or sixteenth century have stylistic similarities to Gujarati art, suggesting that they may originate in Gujarat's weaving traditions. Although many of these textiles have been preserved in Tibet, where they traveled through trade with courts in northeastern India, the persistence of high-quality loom weaving in Gujarat bolsters arguments for their western Indian origins.[29] At the same time, some of the patterns on the silken cloths also resemble eastern Indian designs, indicating that they may have been produced in Assam.[30] These textiles include striking figural weavings depicting mythological creatures, scenes from the life of Krishna, flowering trees, and repetitive patterns of leaping deer (fig. 1.2).[31] Their lampas weaving technique, which combines multiple warps and wefts, suggests the presence of complex loom technology in South Asia, potentially in both Gujarat and Assam, at an early date (fig. 1.3).

From Gujarati looms, the Mughal court adopted the sumptuously woven, gold-threaded *patkā* sashes (fig. 1.4). Weavers created these textiles, which measured over eleven feet long and half a yard wide, from cotton woven with silk and gold- or silver-wrapped threads. Mughal courtiers and emperors cinched these cloths around their waists to hold together the two

FIG. 1.3 Textile fragment with lotuses. India. Silk, lampas weave, fifteenth or sixteenth century. 36½ in. (92.7 cm) × 18¾ in. (47.6 cm). Gift of Michael de Havenon, B.A. 1962, and Georgia de Havenon. Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, 2017.53.4.

FIG. 1.4 Court sash (*patkā*). Probably Gujarat. Cotton, compound weave (twill and plain weave) with supplementary silk and metal-wrapped patterning wefts, seventeenth or early eighteenth century. 129 15/16 in. (330 cm) × 20½ in. (52.1 cm). Gift of John Goelet, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 66.858.

panels of an upper garment, to secure pajama trousers, and, in the absence of pockets, to serve as a convenient attachment point for daggers or little bags. The middle section of the sash, which wound around the wearer's waist, was typically less embellished given its more utilitarian function and the risk of abrasion as the fabric wrapped around the body.[32] The decorative patterning found at the end of these sashes became increasingly intricate and developed from geometric styles with diamond-shaped patterns and chevrons to floral styles by the middle of the seventeenth century. The *chaudānī* pattern, with four squares arranged in a diamond, appears in Mughal paintings and is still woven today.[33]

In addition to the *patkā* sash, Gujarati weavers also supplied plain, striped, and chevron-patterned textiles made from a combination of silk and cotton. The name for this cloth, properly written as *mashrūʿ* (but generally rendered as *mashrū*), derives from Arabic and translates to "prescribed by law, legal, just."[34] For Muslim men, the cloth mitigated the theoretical injunction against wearing pure silk because the cloth is made of a mix of silk and cotton. The cotton fibers of the weft, however, were typically submerged in the warp-faced, satin weaving, allowing the brightly colored silk in the warp prominence.[35] The result was a durable fabric with a shining surface. *Mashrū* patterning included stripes or the *khanjarī* or dagger-shaped patterns formed from ikat dyeing (fig. 1.5). *Mashrū* cloth often appeared in the lower garments of Mughal dress in the form of pajama trousers, which were gathered at the waist, and had wide hips and narrow ankles. The word "pajama" (or *pāyjāma*) combined the Persian words for a covering (*jāma*) of the feet or limbs (*pāy*).[36] The *mashrū* pajama trousers, with their bright stripes of orange, red, blue, and yellow, shone through the translucent white cotton upper garments worn throughout the Mughal Empire.

For a more complete sense of the textiles that a consumer in seventeenth-century Hindustan may have accessed beyond the imperial court, Gujarati *varnaka* texts yield insight into cloth products of the time.[37] Like the earlier *varnaka* works, these texts were written as both descriptions of courtly practices and lists of poetic conventions, and they offer a sense of shared collecting practices across the Mughal Empire but also of the

FIG. 1.5 Woven textile (*khanjarī mashrū*). Gujarat. Silk and cotton, ikat-dyed, satin weave, eighteenth century. 5⅞ in. (15 cm) × 14⁹⁄₁₆ in. (37 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art. Purchased with the Keehmle Fund, 1928. 1928-29-20.

specificity of cloth types present in seventeenth-century Gujarat. While documents in the *varnaka* genre are often merely compilations of terms, and contain amalgamations of words from Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and Gujarati, they give a sense of the sonorous, alliterative rhythm born from reciting the many names for cloth.[38]

One of these *varnaka* texts, the *Jimanvār Paridhān Vidhi* (whose title translates to "Dinner and Dress Rituals"), was written by a scholar named Vidyasoma Muni, who identifies himself as a disciple of Pandit Ratnasomagani. Although the author gives the date of completion as VS 1675 (1618 CE), the editor of the text notes that the descriptions are likely drawn from earlier.[39] The author of the *Jimanvār Paridhān Vidhi* opens with a description of feasting and edible delicacies, listing the various types of seats used for kings at a feast and the types of plates for serving meals, and then follows with a lengthy catalogue of sweets, sugars, fried foods, types of lentils, ghee, vegetables, cooking methods, varieties of betel leaves, and ingredients used in *pān*, followed by the names of fragrant oils and flowers.[40] The list of textiles is prefaced by the words: "then the king gives clothing to his family."[41]

What follows is an extensive compilation of textile names without any descriptive information attached. The list begins with thirty cloths made from different fibers and dye materials, and patterned with varied motifs, but all of whose names end in the suffix *-īyā*, yielding a repeated cadence: *kastūrīyā* (musk-colored), *kusambhīyā* (dyed pink or red with safflower), *tasarīyā* (made from wild *tasar* silk), *hānsalīyā* (patterned with geese).[42] Other cloths in the list suggest types of designs that accord with what we can see in paintings of Gujarati textiles from the Mughal period. The frequency of chevron patterns corresponds to an item in the list naming *chaulahirā* cloth, which suggests "four" (*chau*) and "waves" (*lahirā*). *Lahariyā* cloth is still the name for a chevron-patterned tie-and-dye cloth, and it suggests a waving, pointed, or rippling design.[43] We see *jalodarīyā* and *jodadarīyā*, which may have referred to cloth with different colors in the warp and weft. The effect may have been one of shifting hues, evoking water or the sea, as in the Persian word *daryā*.[44] Another fabric appears as *darīyākhānā*.[45] There are also instances of *mashrū*, rendered also as *mishru*. The lists include patterns of animals and flowers seen on Gujarati block-printed and tie-dyed cotton textiles, including *hansa* (geese), *kamal* (lotus), and *chūnrī gajvadi*, for an elephant form made from tie-dyed dots of color. In an earlier, more fragmentary *varnaka* collection that likely dates to the sixteenth century, many names suggest four-part and diamond-shaped patterns like those seen in Mughal *patkā* sashes, including textiles with the names *hirāgarū* and *hīragarā*, with *hīra* referring to diamond shapes.[46]

This list also suggests imported wares from the Safavid Empire and from China and Europe but also the travels of textiles from across South Asia, including Bengal, Orissa, and southern India. There are textiles listed as *phirangī* (from Europe) and *cīnāshuk*, for something from China, but also textiles described as *kāsmīrīyā* (from Kashmir), *māngalurī* (from Mangalore), *zarzarī malbārī*, for a golden cloth from the Malabar Coast, and the more local *patānī* (from the famous Gujarati weaving city of Patan). There are various types of fabric that we will see more of in Mughal records: *suf*, for wool; *zarzarī*, for a cloth worked with golden thread; *atlas*, the satin fabric; and *chīnt*, for a patterned cotton textile.

The list mentions *nīl netrā*, for a silk dyed with indigo (*nīl*).[47] In the sixteenth-century compilation, *sanjhārāvaū* may suggest a red the color of evening; and *meghādamvara*, after dark clouds, seems to have referred to a black silk cloth.[48] Garments appear in rhythmic order, including *tanubandh*, *shārbandh*, and *kamarbandh*, the last a waist tie from which emerges the English word "cummerbund." The mention of *malmalsāhī*, a fine cotton cloth fit for the shah or king, along with the cotton *mehīmudīshāhī* and *tanusakh* (elsewhere spelled *tansukh*) suggest that these textiles, which appear in Akbar's lists as well, also clothed bodies in Gujarat.[49]

At their most descriptive, the lists also offer clues about details of cloth, such as their texture, which are unavailable in the absence of actual examples or in the smooth renderings in paintings. For instance, Moti Chandra suggests a connection between *āūchīyū* cloth and the Sanskrit word *akuñcita*, which means slightly wrinkled, although it could also relate to the opposite meaning of *ākuñcita*, which suggests something smooth.[50] The cloth *kharamu naramu* refers to something made from unspun silk floss (*kharamu*) that is very soft (*naramu*).[51] The words themselves, with their gentle rhyme and repeated "*u*" sound, conjure a feeling of suppleness. The cloth *chalavalīyā* evokes "something prone to flutter."[52]

The author of the *Jimanvār Paridhān Vidhi* ends his descriptive text by writing: "[The king] brought a variety of clothing from many different lands, and dressed his family, and the townsfolk, and established his name."[53] The ordering of this sentence suggests the legitimizing importance that distributing cloth held for the unnamed "king" described in this text. After bringing together textiles from "different lands," the king first gave the clothing to his family and his subjects, and in so doing, he established his primacy and made his name.

An Empire of Variety and Wild Silks While some of the textiles in the *varnaka* list did come from very distant cities, most were from regional sites closer by, which might indicate that textiles from Kashmir or Bengal were likely still regarded by a writer in Gujarat as originating in "different lands." It also suggests that the landscape of South Asian textile production contained enough variation in terms of both materials and construction to satisfy a kingly taste for novelty. In particular, there existed a wide array of fibers used to craft textiles, ranging from the wild silk from Assam to pashmina wool from a high-altitude goat.

Unlike the rulers of the early modern empires of Safavid Iran and Ming China, the Mughal emperors did not encounter a centralized system of mulberry silk production in India and silk had long been imported.[54] Although sericulture (silkworm cultivation) and silk weaving had been practiced in India for millennia, sericulture involving the silkworm fed on mulberry leaves (*Bombyx mori*) existed mostly at the peripheral edges of Mughal territory. When Emperor Akbar annexed Kashmir in 1586, he gained access to its historical sericulture industry, based around the city of Gilgit.[55] The beginning of the seventeenth century also saw a considerable increase in sericulture in Bengal. Silk had been produced in Bengal since at least the fifteenth century, but sericulture, centered around the market town of Qazimbazar, became one of its major industries only in the

late seventeenth century, drawing both Asian overland trade and European commerce away from Safavid and Ottoman territories.[56]

The Mughal government largely exempted itself from the fierce competition over the raw silk trade that the Safavid and Ottoman empires pursued in the late sixteenth century. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, raw silk grown in the Caspian provinces of the Safavid Empire was transported along overland routes to the Ottoman ports of Bursa and Aleppo, where it was sold to merchants from Europe and the Mediterranean littoral. At the end of the sixteenth century, however, the plundering of silk caravans, internal rebellions, continual warfare between the Safavids and Ottomans, and growing Safavid aspirations for monopolistic control over raw silk markets led to a breakdown of this historic trade network and outright warfare between 1578 and 1590, causing silk prices to skyrocket.[57] In Bursa, the response was to decrease costs of weaving silk by making lighter silks and by improving local efforts at sericulture.[58] During this period, the Safavid ruler Shah ʿAbbas I (r. 1588–1629) reorganized the Persian silk industry under royal control. The crown set prices for raw silk, adjusted taxes, and attempted to redirect trade from the overland commerce with Bursa to Isfahan and Safavid ports in the Persian Gulf.[59]

In this period within Ming China, where silk from the mulberry-fed worm held primacy, the first Ming emperor mandated in the late fourteenth century that members of the gentry should plant hundreds of mulberry trees to feed the silkworms that they were presumably also expected to raise. Once the silk had been harvested from the cocoons and reeled, silk produced in different regions was redistributed through imperial taxation policies and internal trade.[60]

The Indian subcontinent historically imported mulberry silk from Iran and China. Silk traders traveled to Safavid territory via an overland route from Lahore or the sea

FIG. 1.6 Silk skeins (left to right): mulberry silk waste, *eri*, *mūga*, *mūga*, *tasar*, *tasar*, *tasar*, and *tasar*. Assam, Odisha, and Madhya Pradesh, India, 2014. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IS.16 to 23–2015.

FIG. 1.7 Atlas moth (*Attacus atlas*). Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, early seventeenth century. 7 3/32 in. (18 cm) × 4 11/16 in. (11.9 cm). Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-T-1993–116, Gift of P. Formijne, Amsterdam.

route to Hormuz. The trade in silk had a reciprocal benefit for India. The textile economy of South Asia had always been driven more by exports of rough and fine cotton cloth than by any other textile product. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, traders who left India to buy silk would bring with them finely woven Bengali muslins, painted and printed *chīnt* cloth from Gujarat and the Coromandel Coast, and spices from South India. Despite Iran's silk exports, therefore, the balance of trade favored the Mughal Empire; the cost of importing silk was far outweighed by the bullion brought in for goods such as cotton cloth, indigo, and sugar.[61] While his contemporaries were establishing monopolies to control trade, Akbar's son Jahangir actually encouraged imports and liberalized commerce, making tax conditions favorable for overland traders from the Safavid provinces and the Uzbek Khanates.[62]

Within the Mughal Empire, moreover, there existed "wild silk," an alternative to the silk from the *Bombyx mori* silkworm that predominated in East and West Asia and Europe and that continues to produce the vast majority of silk today. Whereas the *Bombyx mori* silkworms have been so fully domesticated that they cannot survive without supplies of mulberry leaves and human care, many other varietals of cocoon-spinning silkworms can be raised in semi-domesticated or wild conditions. The wild silkworm species belonging to the Saturniidae family, including the *mūga*, *tasar*, *eri*, and *atlas* silkworms, have thrived in northeastern India, particularly in Assam, as well as in Orissa and Bihar, for millennia (fig. 1.6).[63] *Mūga* silk, which derives from the species *Antheraea assamensis*, is unique to Assam and is known for its golden-brown or amber hue.[64] Instead of eating exclusively mulberry leaves, as the *Bombyx mori* silkworm does, the *mūga* silkworms feed on a variety of shrubs and trees; for the whiter threads treasured by the ruling kings of Ahom in Assam, the *mūga* worms were given leaves from the champa tree, a member of the magnolia family (*Michelia champaca*). *Tasar* silk production is more widespread and the large cocoons, the size of a chicken egg, are collected in the wild or in semi-domesticated conditions. The color of the silk is often golden yellow.[65] The *eri* silkworms feed on the leaves of the castor oil plant. They do not spin their cocoons as a single, continuous thread, meaning that *eri* silk has shorter filaments and was carded and spun, like cotton.[66] When woven, this gave it a softly lustrous appearance. Another discontinuous, brown silk fiber comes from a silkworm that emerges from its cocoon as the largest moth in the world. This *atlas* silk moth (*Attacus atlas*) is depicted in a Mughal painting from the early seventeenth century (fig. 1.7).[67] A medieval text describes the colors of the various wild silks as "yellow," "wheat-colored," the color of "butter,"

FIG. 1.8 Coverlet (*colcha*). Satgaon, Bengal. Cotton, embroidered with *tasar* silk, seventeenth century. 126 in. (320 cm) × 107 in. (271.8 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Helena Woolworth McCann Collection, Purchase, Gift of Winfield Foundation, by exchange, 1975 (1975.4).

and white.[68] Garments woven from wild silks were also tougher and could be water resistant: fabric woven from *eri* silk was said to "last the lifetime of the owner."[69]

Despite being less abundant than China's mulberry-fed silkworms, the wild silks of India became a luxurious product in the early modern maritime trade. There is both textual and material evidence from European records that Portuguese traders developed a taste for cotton quilts that were embroidered with *mūga* and *tasar* silk. The silk threads had been traded southwest to Bengal, where the quilts were likely embroidered in Satgaon in the vicinity of Portuguese-controlled Hughli by artisans based on designs provided by European merchants (fig. 1.8). The Portuguese did not know the derivation of the silk and called it *herba*, thinking that it derived from a plant.[70] Sturdy textiles made of *eri* silk were also exported from Bengal to England in the second half of the seventeenth century.[71]

Within South Asia, this wild silk also traveled. The *Jimanvār Paridhān Vidhi* from Gujarat includes textiles with the names *mūgīyā* and *tasarīyā*, suggesting that they were woven from the *mūga* and *tasar* silks.[72] The *Ā'īn-i Akbarī* indicates that Akbar incorporated these materials from Assam and northeastern India into his wardrobe, despite the fact that Assam would not come under Mughal control until the seventeenth century. The *Ā'īn-i Akbarī* lists *tasar* silk as one of the cheaper silks available ($^1/_3$ to 2 rupees per piece), equivalent in price to dyed cotton and to the woven taffeta silk of Europe ($^1/_4$ to 2 rupees in value).[73]

The *Ā'īn-i Akbarī* also includes a cloth listed as *tāut bandpurī*, which is valued at a higher range of 2 rupees to $1^1/_2$ mohurs per piece. The term *tāutband* is transliterated in the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*, where supplemental notes in the Persian again mention the importance of the "Hindi" pronunciation of the "t" sound.[74] This indicates an unfamiliar Indic word for which there was no Persian synonym. *Tāutband* cloth, woven from wild silk, had no equivalent from elsewhere. Muhammad Cazim, writing in 1661, noted that the people of Assam "are successful in embroidering with flowers, and in weaving . . . *tāutbund*, which is a species of silk of which they make tents and kenauts [*qanāts*]."[75] *Tāutband* silks were woven from *eri* silk, and it seems that their central feature was the durability of their construction.[76] This was due not only to the weaving but also to the fact that *eri* silk is among the strongest silk fibers in existence, with three times the tensile sturdiness of *Bombyx mori* silk.[77] In selecting these tent panels (*qanāt*) made from such an ecologically localized but useful material, the Mughal court drew upon the unique advantages of South Asia's textile culture in regions that Rahul Jain has identified as existing "at, if not beyond, the periphery of 'Mughal' and 'Islamic' India."[78] The Mughal court sought out idiosyncratic textiles from beyond the imperial realm. Rather than impose a single form of production or standardization of materials, Akbar and his contemporaries patronized the diversity of South Asian cloth production for their own advantage.

Goat-Hair Treasures Beyond the strong wild silks, the wool and cotton textiles circulating as valued objects within the Mughal Empire also marked departures from the mulberry-silk fibers and golden threads that had become emblematic of stature and

wealth throughout Europe and Asia.[79] In early modern Hindustan, cotton, wool, and goat-hair fabrics commanded high prices not because of their glint or sheen but for softness, warmth, saturation of color, and coolness on the skin, qualities that went beyond the cost of the materials or the sophistication of the technology used to produce them.[80] This did not mean that the Mughal elite renounced the "shared culture of objects" that characterized early modern Islamicate courts.[81] Yet by incorporating cloth beyond what was recognized worldwide as the accepted materials of luxury costume, the emperor, princes, noblemen, and traveling traders experienced the pleasures of airy cotton and velvety wool, as well as the sophisticated intellectual, poetic, and political messages that could be carried in these more localized fabrics.

This emphasis on texture over the grandeur of silk and precious metal threads emerges in the autobiography of Banarasidas, a Jain merchant who composed his memoir in 1641. Looking backward in time, he described the ways in which the texture of life changed in the city of Jaunpur following news of the death of Emperor Akbar in 1605. "The people, bereft of their emperor, felt orphaned and hopeless," he wrote. The wealthy feared that chaos would descend; they buried their jewelry and sealed their doors.[82] They also changed their attire: "Men began to wear plain clothes / And casting off fine shawls, wrapped themselves in rough blankets / The women too began to dress plainly."[83] Conditions returned to normal ten days later, when the news spread that Prince Salim, Akbar's son, had ascended to the throne as Emperor Jahangir and now reigned throughout the Mughal Empire. Yet in this passage of his autobiography, Banarasidas revealed the clothing habits of Jaunpur in more precise terms than are typically available for non-imperial cities.

Banarasidas does not name the fabrics donned by the rich in order to appear poor. It seems to have been more significant to his reader that he repeats twice that the texture of these garments was *mote*, from *motā*, an adjective that can mean "plump" but here implies "thick," "rough," and "coarse." He writes that instead of wearing fine shawls or thin cotton cloths, the rich took to wearing *kambal*s, or blankets. The women, too, donned clothing that was *motā*. The narrator had a unique sensitivity to textiles, as the reader learns, when Banarasidas details his experience selling cloth of various qualities, in addition to rubies, sapphires, ghee, and gem dust, in the imperial capital of Agra. Still later, he uses the word *dukūl*, which refers to fine and smooth fabric, to describe the valuable Jaunpur cloth that his father sent with him to the market in Agra.[84] Banarasidas's comments suggest that for a seventeenth-century merchant who had traveled to Agra, the rich began to resemble the poor not when they wore textiles of a specific fiber but when they abjured from cloths of a pleasing texture. In the sensibility of the seventeenth century, the basest cloth was that which was "thick" and "rough," "harsh" and "coarse" to the touch.

Akbar's Mughal predecessors, including his father, Humayun (r. 1530–40; 1555–56), and grandfather, Babur (r. 1526–30), had brought with them a particular appreciation for fine woolen textiles due to their strong connection to Persian and Central Asian cloth traditions.[85] The *Bāburnāma*, the autobiographic record of Babur's reign, includes many references to the use of felt—the unwoven, dense, warm, and waterproof wool fabric

FIG. 1.9 Felt mat (*namad*). Iran. Felted goat hair and wool, nineteenth century. 69⅔ in. (177 cm) × 137⅘ in. (350 cm). Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, EA2002.6.

used for nomadic tents, carpets, and outer garments in the wintry months in Central Asia.[86] In Safavid Iran, the most precious use of felt was in *takya-namad*, a luxurious felt mat made from the very softest goat hair.[87] In 1540, the Safavid Shah Tahmasp included in his gifts for the Mughal emperor, Humayun, "reclining felts made of kork [*kurk*-goat hair] and lined with *atlas* [satin]."[88] Kept its "natural beige or reddish-brown" color, but often decorated with colored additions of wool, a *takya-namad* was either placed on top of a carpet or folded in four to make a thicker cushioned support (fig. 1.9). Like the shawls for which Kashmir became famous, the *takya-namad* mats were made from the soft inner hair of a goat of the species of the *Capra hircus*; unlike the *Capra hircus laniger*, which is native to the Himalayas, this goat grazed in the mountainous regions of Khurasan.[89] When Dutch and English traders learned of this fine wool, they began exporting it to Europe to make hats and were partial to its natural reddish-brown color.[90]

Of the twenty-six different woolen products listed in Akbar's *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*, four of the woolen products are *namad*, or felted mats. Of these, two are listed as *takya-namad*; one entry lists these fine felted mats as "Kabuli" (from Kabul), and the other lists them as "Hindi," or of Indian manufacture.[91] The price for the Kabuli *takya-namad* is left blank, but the local, "Hindi" version is relatively inexpensive, ranging from $1^1/_2$ to 5 rupees. The other two *namad* are described as "*manjī namad*" and "*kanpak namad*." The meaning of these two descriptors for the *namad* eluded nineteenth-century transcribers and translators of the text. Given the high prestige of the reddish-brown color of the fine goat hair used for the *takya-namad*, it seems plausible that *manjī* may be a reference to the *manjisthā* or Indian madder dye (*Rubia cordifolia*), which colors cloth a reddish-brown hue. These *manjī namad*, made from local goat or sheep wool, may have been dyed to appear like the much finer reddish-brown cloths of Khurasan.

The climate of India is distinctive from that of mountainous Khurasan, Samarqand, or Kabul. When Babur, who was raised in Samarqand, first entered India at Nangarhar, he wrote in his autobiography, "I had never seen a hot climate or any of Hindustan before. . . . A new world came into view—different plants, different trees, different animals and birds, different tribes and people, different manners and customs. It was astonishing, truly astonishing."[92] The warmth and insulation provided by felted mats, which was critical in regions

that experienced bitter winters, were not as essential in the "astonishing," hot climate of South Asia.

At the Mughal court under Akbar, it was the softness of woolen garments and shawls that brought the highest esteem. Within the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, garments made from what is now known as cashmere were up to twenty-five times more valuable than the most expensive *namad* mat. These fibers came from the fine underhair of the *Capra hircus laniger*, a goat that is raised at high altitudes on the Tibetan Plateau (figs. 1.10 and 1.11).[93] Weavers in the region of Kashmir obtained this soft fiber from the nomadic Changpa people of eastern Ladakh, who attained a monopoly on the trade in pashmina from western Tibet beginning in the seventeenth century.[94] The Mughal elite benefited from trade policies and support for manufactures that had been instituted by the fifteenth-century independent ruler of Kashmir, Sultan Zayn al-ʿAbidin, although the loom technology and techniques of fine tapestry weaving were likely known in Kashmir before then.[95] Historical accounts also note that washing the fibers in the "sweet water" of Kashmir led to the unparalleled softness of the shawls; seventeenth-century reports suggest that those washed in the rivers of the plains of India were never as supple.[96]

The *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* devotes long sections of description to pashmina and its even softer and rarer counterpart, *tūs*, which comes from the Tibetan antelope, or "Chiru" (*Pantholops hodgsonii*).[97] "This kind of shawl," Abu'l Fazl wrote of the *tūs*, "is unrivalled for its lightness, warmth, and softness. People generally wear it without altering its natural color; his Majesty has had it dyed." Akbar also altered the fashion of wearing shawls and "commenced to wear them double, which looks very well."[98]

While the fiber of these shawls is technically a form of goat or antelope hair, the garments were categorized at the Mughal court as being made of wool, known by the Perso-Arabic word *sūf* or the Persian word *pashm*, which can refer to sheep's wool but also to goat, camel, or donkey hair.[99] *Pashm*, or wool, is the root of the word "pashmina," with the suffix *-ina* suggesting that it is "made of *pashm*." In the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, pashmina shawls from Kashmir are categorized with other wool fabrics such as valuable, thick broadcloth imported from Europe and *namad* mats. Although silk was, on average, more costly, the "wool" shawls from Kashmir could be even more expensive than brocaded silk velvet,

FIG. 1.10 Pashmina goats. Debring, Rupshu, Eastern Ladakh, 2016. Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation.

FIG. 1.11 Landscape of Debring, just below Taglang La Pass at an elevation of 17,480 feet (5,328 meters). Rupshu, Eastern Ladakh, 2016. Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation.

FIG. 1.12 Portrait of Muʿin al-Din Chishti (d. 1236) holding a globe. Bichitr, Mughal Empire. Folio from the Minto Album. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1610–1618. 8 9/16 in. (21.8 cm) × 5 1/8 in (13 cm). Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, CBL In 07A.14r.

and Abu'l Fazl lists prices that range from two rupees to twenty-five mohurs for a turban made of the finest pashmina.[100] Calculated in today's prices, the most expensive *pashm* turban would cost over three thousand dollars.[101]

Because pashmina shawls were considered wool, they maintained a convenient duality: they were exceedingly fine but were also acceptable within the religious and ethical frameworks of the Mughal court. Wool was seen as the most pious fabric because of its associations with the original clothing given by God to Adam and Eve.[102] The word "Sufi," for a devotee of the mystical branch of Islam, derives from *sūf*, because Sufis were known to wear wool; the most respected saints from Sufi history are portrayed in Mughal portraits wearing pashmina shawls, marked by the natural color of the wool and the faint, unhemmed fringe at the ends of the shawl (fig. 1.12).[103] The irony of wearing the finest goat-hair textile as a "robe of the poor" would have been clear in Akbar's time, but it does not seem to have caused discomfort. Abu'l Fazl wrote of Akbar's pious clothing habits: "from his indifference to everything that is worldly, His Majesty prefers and wears woolen stuffs, especially shawls."[104] Abu'l Fazl does not mention that Akbar's shawls were often made of pashmina or the even finer *tūs* fiber.

Abu'l Fazl also notes that Akbar changed the name of these garments to *parmnarm*, an Indo-Persian hybrid. *Parm* is a contraction of the Sanskrit *param*, which means "exceedingly," "distinguished," "of the highest degree," or "perfect."[105] *Narm* is a word of Persian origin that means "soft to the touch" and "smooth."[106] Other shawls, though much less expensive (3 rupees to 2 1/2 mohurs), were called *parmgarm*, a contraction of *param* and *garam*, which is Sanskrit for "warm," again suggesting that the warmest shawls were not necessarily the most valued. On the sensory level, Akbar's renaming of the pashmina shawl draws attention to its exceedingly soft and smooth texture, or to its perfect warmth. The circulation of these shawls throughout South Asia made pashmina into the paragon of softness; by the early eighteenth century, a variety of silk velvet was praised as being as soft as pashmina.[107] In hierarchies of luxury textiles, it would be assumed that silk velvet would be

the "highest degree" or the "perfect" standard of softness. Akbar and his successors assigned that honor instead to goat hair (fig. 1.13).

The Value of Woven Air By embracing a diverse ensemble of textures and fabrics, members of the Mughal court departed from styles of dress common to the Persianate world, particularly in their use of cotton cloth. Cotton fabrics were produced throughout South Asia, from the west in Gujarat to the eastern reaches of Bengal. Consumers in ancient Greece imported cotton textiles from Bengal, known in Greek as *Gangitiki* because they were made along the Ganges River, which were said to be of the most diaphanous texture.[108] Fine cotton textiles traveled via the Indian Ocean to Europe, Egypt, and China.[109] Stephen Dale cites Tang-era Chinese texts that describe Indian-style patterned cotton garments as "sunrise clouds of morning" and Indian musicians clothed in "dawn-flushed cotton."[110] These cotton cloths gained multilingual praise for their airiness, their translucency, and the fine spray of color that they imparted on top of the skin. Cotton cloths were able to travel this far because they exhibited the ideal conditions for portability: textiles, especially fine muslins, are slender in volume, nearly weightless, and can be folded into tight spaces.

By the turn of the seventeenth century, however, the finest of these cotton textiles were kept for exclusive use within the Mughal Empire. Merchants in Bengal were forbidden from exporting the most valuable cotton textiles and were required instead to send the cloths to the Mughal imperial court and members of the high-ranking nobility.[111] Emperor Akbar supported lowering levies on cotton crops, a factor that led to a boom in the cultivation of cotton, but Bengal also paid a large portion of its tribute to the imperial court in the form of cloth.[112] Lightweight cotton cloth was vulnerable in transport. Sixteenth-century accounts suggest that muslin cloth was carried overland to Ottoman and Safavid territories in cases made of hollow bamboo to protect the thin fabric from snags and tears.[113]

The specific ecological conditions necessary for the cloth's production in Bengal limited its geographic spread to the riverine regions surrounding Dhaka. The special traits of the thin cotton, known locally as *malmal*, derived from the naturally soft texture of a varietal of short-staple cotton (*Gossypium herbaceum*) that flourished in particular areas along the banks of the Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers, whose soils were high in lime and silica; it grew best when it matured slowly in spring seasons with little rainfall.[114] The gentle techniques of untangling the cotton with a fish jawbone comb and ginning the raw cotton with a bow kept the fibers elastic. The humidity of the climate and the particularities of the water's composition also assisted in spinning the fine threads.

FIG. 1.13 Pashmina shawl. Kashmir. Goat hair, double interlock twill tapestry weave, ca. 1675–1725. 92 15/16 in. (236.03 cm) × 26 13/16 in. (68.07 cm). The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., 6.10. Acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1927.

FIG. 1.14 Hand-spun cotton threads. Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2015. Drik Picture Gallery and the Bengal Muslin Project.

FIG. 1.15 *Kandul* (pick made of ox horn) used to weave *jāmdāni* cloth. Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2015. Drik Picture Gallery and the Bengal Muslin Project.

In cold and dry weather, the cotton fiber's texture is waxy and harsh; if it is hot and dry, the fibers develop an electric charge and radiate away from each other instead of cohering into thread (fig. 1.14).[115] The curly cotton fibers are best spun, warped, and woven under conditions of warm humidity. Expert spinners and weavers in Bengal, many of them young women, knew to spin cotton thread in the dewy early morning and the humid late afternoons.[116]

Cotton weavers in Bengal wove fine muslin cloth in pit looms. A length of twenty yards of the finest cloth could take two working weavers anywhere from ten days to six months to create. The labor-intensive nature of spinning the thread and weaving the diaphanous cotton cloth meant that it could rival and even surpass silk cloth in cost. Subtle supplementary-weft patterns, still seen on *jāmdāni* muslin today, were created through "hand manipulation," or the addition of extra wefts by hand to form designs on the cloth while it is being woven, rather than through mechanical adjustments to the loom (fig. 1.15).[117]

The wardrobe that the Mughal elite assembled from cotton textiles marked a departure from garments worn by the first Mughal rulers, Babur and Humayun, who favored the heavy *postīn*, or leather coat, and the *chapān*, a long coat made from wool, silk, and leather, that were more suited to the cooler climates of Babur's original homeland in Central Asia.[118] In Persianate and Central Asian dress, like that worn by Babur and Humayun as well as by the Mughals' contemporaries in the Safavid Empire, cotton cloth was worn as a shawl by women or used for the parts of the dress that were hidden. Safavid consumers, who imported their cotton from India, wore cotton garments as long undershirts, or *pīrāhan*, which were tied over the right shoulder and were also used as nightshirts. Persian women donned white undershirts from fine thin cotton cloth known as *khalkhāl*, possibly an Indian import in material and name (from *malmal*).[119] Yet what distinguished the Safavid use of cotton from that of the Mughal court was color: their *qabā* jackets were made of "very fine cotton, dyed red, yellow, green, or any other color according to their fancy."[120] The *pīrāhan* shift is described as being made of "colored cotton" and "seldom pure white." The French merchant Jean-Baptiste Tavernier explained that white undergarments were avoided "because soap is so scarce in Persia; moreover they are not very good at bleaching. When we come from India to Persia we take for six months needs of underwear ['linge blanc'] and take it back to India where they are better at bleaching."[121]

By contrast, Akbar's broad adoption of white cotton cloth for both his inner and outer garments reflected the fact that in India, cotton clothing was both ubiquitous and more visible. It was worn as turbans and shawls, wrapped around the waist (as in a traditional South Asian *dhotī* or *lungī*), or used in the draped women's sari. In North India in the centuries preceding the Mughal Empire, a particular type of tailored cotton garment, called a *jāma*, had come into widespread use.[122] Made from white translucent material, it had a tight upper bodice that crossed diagonally at the chest; long, closely fitting sleeves; and a skirt that extended below the knees. A fashionable variant of this garment, known as the *chākdār jāma*, had a four-pointed hem along the bottom edge.[123] At the Mughal court, translucent cotton *jāma*s were often worn with only a thin undershirt or without anything underneath, allowing the glow of the skin, the wetness of perspiration, and the curls of body hair to show through, as can be seen in the portrait of Akbar's foster brother (*koka*) (fig. 1.16). By contrast, in the southern region of the Deccan, the sultans of Golconda and Bijapur, whose courtly practices were more shaped by Safavid Iran, wore the translucent *jāma*, but also donned white cotton in the form of long, loose garments and layered their white cloth to make it opaque (fig. 1.17).

The importance of a wide variety of cotton textiles within Akbar's wardrobe is reflected in the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, which lists thirty different types of cotton fabric and their respective prices, alongside the thirty-nine varieties of silk and twenty-six types of wool. The most valuable textiles remained the cloths woven with gold and silk; the gold-brocaded silk velvet from Yazd could range in price from 15 to 150 mohurs. Yet *khāsa* cotton cloth, from the Persian word for "special," could rival the cloth woven from gold-wrapped threads in cost, as the price for an ambiguously defined "piece" could

FIG. 1.16 Zain Khan Koka. Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, late sixteenth century. 12 9/16 in. (32 cm) × 8 11/16 in. (22 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Museum Purchase from the estate of Captain E. G. Spencer-Churchill, 1965, IS.91–1965.

FIG. 1.17 Portrait of Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah of Golconda. Hashim, Mughal Empire. Folio from the Minto Album. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 1623–25, borders ca. 1625–30. Page: 15 3/16 in. (38.6 cm) × 10 7/16 in. (26.5 cm). Image: 7 11/16 in. (19.6 cm) × 4 5/8 in. (11.7 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IM.22–1925.

range from three rupees to fifteen mohurs (approximately two thousand dollars in contemporary prices).[124]

The cotton textiles in the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* seem to all have come from within South Asia and were grouped under the general category of *rīsmān*, a Persian word that can refer to rope, thread, or simply "cotton."[125] These cotton cloths bore idiosyncratic names that melded Persian with Indic languages or referred to specific geographic locations and climatic conditions. After *khāsa* cloth, the third textile on the list is the word *malmal*, a Persian transcription of a Bengali word that is still widely used for the plain, white, woven cotton cloths from Bengal.[126] Another of the most valuable cotton textiles was named *tansukh*, a word that combines *tan*, for the body, with the Sanskrit *sukh*, meaning pleasure, ease, comfort, or happiness.[127] John T. Platts defined *tansukh* as "reposing, indulging; idling; bodily ease."[128] *Tansukh* also appears in the Gujarati *varnaka* lists. The name of the cloth suggests both the translation of local vocabulary into Akbar's wardrobe and a recognition of the pleasure of wearing this thin, fine cotton fabric that would put the body at ease in hot temperatures.

Another cotton textile listed in the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, but also found in the descriptive literature from Gujarat, is the cloth called *gangājal*, a word that refers to water of the Ganges (Ganga) River. Ganges water itself is a holy substance, and naming the cloth after this life-giving river that runs from the Himalayan Mountains south to Bengal aligned it with a particular sacred geography. In a later section of the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, Abu'l Fazl writes: "The sarkār of Bārbakābād produces a fine cloth called *Gangajal*, and a great abundance of oranges."[129] Barbakabad was situated northwest of Dhaka along the Ganges River before it joined together with the Brahmaputra River. The *gangājal* textiles are also mentioned in the same entry as oranges, making both the cloth and the fruit seem like natural products of a unique location. The nearby Sarkar of Bazoha is described as having "extensive forests which furnish long and thick timbers of which masts are made." The Sarkar of Sunargaon, the site from which Akbar received a gift of cotton during his feast, "produces a species of muslin very fine and in great quantity. In the township of Kiyāra Sundar is a large reservoir which gives a peculiar whiteness to the cloths that are washed in it."[130] These notes indicate a high degree of specificity. Moving outside of the Kiyāra Sundar township, one lost access to the water reservoir that gave the Sunargaon cloths their whiteness; traveling along the river toward the maritime ports, the cloth was no longer the fine *gangājal*. Taken together, the lists of cloth and the accounts of regional fruits, timber, and water reservoirs suggest that cotton textiles carried a sense of the precision of Bengal's local geography into Akbar's inventories of his empire.

The Fabric of Compromise The cloth, *gangājal*, with its connection to the sacred Ganges, is also a reminder that amid the religious diversity of the Mughal Empire, cotton provided a fabric of compromise. This was true on a material level: in the case of the *mashrū* textiles, the addition of cotton wefts made the cloth permissible, implying that cotton could neutralize the decadence of silk.[131] The wearing of plain cotton garments also had an ethical dimension within Islamicate culture. Sufi texts, influential at the

Mughal court, considered cotton the second-best material for pious clothing, after the originary *sūf*, or wool. The Timurid Sufi thinker Kashifi (d. 1504/5) wrote that if one were asked why cotton is only "acceptable," while wool is the "best," the explanation is: "because its appearance is like that of linen and silk which are finer than the commonness of wool." Kashifi implies that the problem with cotton is that it can look like linen and silk, even if the fabric itself has the "commonness of wool." Yet the Prophet Muhammad wore a cotton tunic and garments made of wool and cotton mixed together, proof of its lawfulness.[132]

Islamic texts in the *akhlāq* genre, which engaged questions of philosophy, morality, and manners, also prescribe simple modes of dress.[133] In the *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī* of Nasir al-Din Tusi (1201–74), which was a central ethical text of Akbar's court, it was encouraged that children be "kept from soft clothing" and "brought to avoid light clothing and the cool room in summer, and the heavy cloak and the fire in winter." In general, children should be "led to look favorably on contempt for eating, drinking and the wearing of splendid clothes . . . brightly colored and embroidered clothes are fitting for women, while noble and eminent persons pay no heed to such things."[134] While Tusi does not name cotton as the ideal cloth, his instructions are carried out in the unadorned white fabric of the Mughal *jāma*. It is mostly free of bright colors, embroidery, or any other finery, even if the cloth was very soft and light in the summer.

During the emperor's public appearances, the white color of the cloth may have also affirmed for his subjects that the fabric was the more pious cotton, and not fine silk. Jean de Thévenot, a seventeenth-century European traveler, wrote that the *jāma*s were "commonly made of white stuff, that's to say of cotton-cloth, the end they may be the lighter, and the neater by being often washed; and that agrees with the fashion of the ancient Indians."[135] Anything of different colors was likely not cotton, as Thévenot noted that "when the rich do not wear white they use silk."[136] In addition to proclaiming its cleanliness and the virtuosity of its bleaching, the white cotton *jāma* could thus be justified as a fabric made of a material associated with spiritual and ethical piety.

Moreover, the translucency of the cotton *jāma* provided a means of mediating what Phillip Wagoner has described as the "sharply opposing attitudes to the body that underlie the Islamicate and traditional Indic systems of dress." In the "Indic" sartorial culture of kingship, the king appeared bare-chested because the body was thought to "reflect the inner state and qualities of the individual."[137] The purpose of a garment, Wagoner notes, was "not to conceal the body, but to reveal, frame, and accentuate its forms."[138] In "Islamicate" royal dress codes, the king covered his body in rich robes because the "uncovered body is held to be naked and shameful."[139] Medieval Persian advice manuals stated that "men and women" should avoid wearing "a tight robe beneath which their body is revealed."[140] The thin, loose cotton *jāma* did not meet this last requirement, since it revealed the shape of the body beneath. But it allowed the king to be clothed and yet for his "inner state" to be revealed, a fact that may have been particularly salient to Akbar's court. Among the central mythologies put forward by Abu'l Fazl was that Akbar's sacred kingship manifested as a divine light that both served as the origin for Akbar's birth (his mother was said to have been impregnated by this divine light) and radiated

outward in the wisdom and beneficence of his rule.[141] That Akbar wore garments through which light could pass meant that this inner state of divinity could be seen.

Sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Mughal paintings contain only very specific instances when figures are shown with bare skin: in paintings of laborers working to construct Akbar's palaces, in the love-mad figure of Majnun from Persian poetry, and in representations of Hindu ascetics. Tellingly, in a painting of an ascetic with the Mughal prince Parvez, the painter emphasizes the similarities between the appearance of the ascetic's unclothed torso and the prince's body with its thin layer of cotton (fig. 1.18).

In court paintings that emphasize Emperor Akbar's physicality and strength, he is typically wearing translucent white cloth. Akbar wears white when he is wrestling a stampeding elephant into submission or when he rides into battle (fig. 1.19). Perhaps the most unusual is a scene in which Akbar has killed his foster brother, Adham Khan, upon

FIG. 1.18 Mughal Prince Parvez and a Holy Man. Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1610. 5⅞ in. (15 cm) × 3⅜ in. (8.6 cm). Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1929.3.

FIG. 1.19 Akbar mounted on the elephant Hawāʾī. Basawan and Chetar, Mughal Empire. From the *Akbarnāma*. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1590–1595. 13 in. (33 cm) × 7⅞ in. (20 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Purchased from Frances Clarke, 1896. IS.2:22–1896.

نیم جانی باقی بود بارحکم عالی شد که ان سرکشته بخت برگشته را بالا اورند درین مرتبه چون

موی کشان آوردند بموجب فرمان فدا باهتمام تمام سرنگون انداخته چنانچه کردن اش خم شکست و معترضان افتاده

FIG. 1.20A Akbar and Adham Khan. Miskin and Shankar, Mughal Empire. From the *Akbarnāma*. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1590–95. 13 in. (33 cm) × 7 11/16 in. (19.5 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Purchased from Frances Clarke, 1896. IS.2:29–1896.

FIG. 1.20B Detail.

his return to court after an insurrection (fig. 1.20a).[142] The painting depicts a frenzied moment when Akbar threw his foster brother from the balcony—although he had to do so twice because of the short distance to the ground. Akbar, who has just burst from his sleeping quarters, wears only a long, pleated *lungī* around his waist and a *patkā* sash. A translucent, gold-edged cotton shawl partially veils his bare chest. The sheer textile reveals the emperor's whole torso. His right leg, seen through the translucent material of his *lungī*, forms a thick wedge that approaches the edge of the balcony, but bears down on it solidly. The emperor's body, unlike that of his foster brother, is not on the verge of tumbling.[143]

The violence of the moment seems to have been displaced onto the textile; the shawl shudders as it falls from the emperor's shoulders, forming a blurred, undulating line against the dark background of the door (fig. 1.20b). While the emperor's sash and pointed slippers cut tight, neat curves around Akbar's waist and feet, the drape of the shawl is spontaneous, loose, and asymmetrical. The manuscript painters have sought to capture the illusion of a diaphanous layer of cloth. They have alternated curving sweeps of dry, semi-opaque white folds with areas where the white paint thins to nothing. When the cloth doubles over a contoured surface, as in the case of the bunched areas over Akbar's arm, gray and violet colors suggest a subtle shadow. In the sections where the cloth covers the red-tiled background, the cloth muffles the brighter colors behind it. While muslin cloth was often the first layer of clothing one put on, it was the final addition to this painted representation. In the painting, the muslin cloth ultimately draws attention to Akbar's body instead of obscuring it. The soft, rounded line of the cloth as it makes its way across the emperor's chest enhances the feeling of the body's volume. The wisps of cloth, painted in cool white on either side of Akbar's bare shoulder, heighten the sense of his warm flesh. The cloth is close and intimate; in its loose drape, it carries a reminder of the bedchamber that the emperor has just left and offers a glimpse of the uncovered state that the emperor has hastily tried to conceal.

This painting is as close as Akbar would come to nudity in any of his representations. It conforms to what Wagoner identified in the southern state of Vijayanagara as the sartorial distinction between the public persona of the king, in which the ruler dressed in "Islamicate" robes, and private, domestic attire, in which the king's bare torso reflected an "Indic" style of dress. Wagoner used visual evidence from a

well-known seventeenth-century painted textile from southeastern India for his argument that Vijayanagara's kings processed in public fully dressed; but in private, they went bare-chested with only a *lungī* around their waists (fig. 1.21).[144] Likewise, with his *rudraksha* beads and the *lungī* tied at his waist, Emperor Akbar is shown embracing a more traditional Indic style of dress within the privacy of his sleeping quarters.

A painting likely from the same decade that illustrates a Persian translation of the Hindu *Rāmāyana* suggests the identification of a bare torso with Indic modes of dress (fig. 1.22). Akbar commissioned the translation of Valmiki's *Rāmāyana* into Persian; it was completed in 1588. As John Seyller has shown, the painted illustrations to the text conform to the Mughal courtly style. In a version made for the high-ranking Mughal nobleman and general ʿAbd al-Rahim, the illustrations contain naturalistic representations of human faces and architectural spaces, as well as turbaned figures and tents made of Persian carpets.[145] Yet in their dress, the characters from the *Rāmāyana* differ from the clothing seen in other Mughal paintings. In a scene depicting a seated Rama listening as his sons Kusa and Lava chant the *Rāmāyana*, the hero's chest is bare except for the translucent wash of a lightweight white shawl.[146] Elsewhere in the scene, the more minor figures wear brightly colored scarves that twist and curl around their unclad torsos. In the case of Rama, the dip of the translucent cotton shawl accentuates the rounded curve of his bare stomach, making him appear virile and strong.

Women at the Mughal court also wore translucent cotton in the privacy of the household, although representations of their dress are rare. In the mid-seventeenth

FIG. 1.21 Hanging. Coastal southeastern India, probably for a Nayaka court. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, mid-seventeenth century. 61 in. (155 cm) × 79½ in. (202 cm). Musée national des arts asiatiques—Guimet, Paris, from the Riboud Collection, MA 5678.

FIG. 1.22 Kusa and Lava chant the poem before Rama. Govardhan, Mughal Empire. From a *Rāmāyana*. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 1597–1605. 10 13/16 in. (27.5 cm) × 6 in. (15.2 cm). Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1907.271.14.

مورخان هستند می گویند که در نسل راجه من راجهای بزرگ بسیار پیدا شدند ندان چنان راجهایی
که تمام روی زمین را بقوت خویش متصرف شدند و از انجمله راجه سگر بود که بفرموده او در

FIG. 1.23 Court Lady. Attributed to Bishandas, Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1620. 4¼ in. (10.8 cm) × 2⅜ in. (6.1 cm). Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1984.43.

FIG. 1.24 Sita shies away from Hanuman, believing he is Ravana in disguise. Attributed to Husayn Naqqash and Mulla Shah Muhammad, Mughal Empire. From a *Rāmāyana*. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 1594. 14⅞ in. (37.8 cm) × 10 in. (25.6 cm). The David Collection, Copenhagen, Inv. no. 68/1998.

century, the French gem merchant Jean-Baptiste Tavernier recounted that "the sultanas and the wives of the great nobles make themselves shifts and garments for the hot weather, and the King and the nobles enjoy seeing them wearing these fine shifts and cause them to dance in them."[147] An early seventeenth-century painting of a woman at the Mughal court may depict the kinds of dress that Tavernier claimed to have seen at court (fig. 1.23). The figure wears a round, crimson hat that fastens beneath her chin, along with pajama trousers the color of turmeric and a golden *patkā* sash. She holds a flower in one hand and a manuscript that she is reading in the other. The abundance of pearl necklaces, golden jewelry, and shawls contrasts with her sheer white *pīrāhan* blouse and the wispy texture of her draped shawls, which are indicated by cloud-like lines behind her shoulder. The effect of the white cloth on the figure is ambiguous. As a woman engaged in reading, she is not displaying her body through dance and though her breasts are visible, she is very much clothed.

A similar tension between revelation and modesty occurs in another Mughal-era painting from a different *Rāmāyana* that depicts the female heroine, Sita, wearing a translucent white *cholī* blouse (fig. 1.24). Recent research has suggested that this version of the *Rāmāyana* was in the collection of Akbar's mother, Hamida Banu Begum.[148] Female figures dressed in translucent white garments recur throughout this version of the manuscript. In the painting of Sita's upper garment, the artists have indicated the presence of the sheer layer of white fabric by slightly lightening the paint color used for Sita's arms and chest; with shading, her breasts can be seen through the cloth. Within the narrative of the *Rāmāyana*, however, this is meant to be a painting about chastity. This scene depicts Sita rebuffing the monkey-god Hanuman out of the belief that he is the evil King Ravana in disguise. Ensconced within the square enclosures of her garden, Sita is protected and pure. Given its patronage by Hamida Banu Begum, the painting raises interesting questions about the modes of visibility for female bodies within the imperial household. Together with the portrait of the woman at court, this painting suggests that while a translucent layer of cotton cloth could reveal a figure's body, it also partially retained her modesty.

The Pleasure of Cotton and the Cooling Names of Cloth When the body appeared with only a thin shawl, or without visible clothing, it was not necessarily perceived as naked but rather clad in the elements. Within medieval Indic texts, the lord Shiva is sometimes described as wearing nothing and thus being "sky clad." One of the two major branches of Jainism is also called the sky-clad, or Digambara; the monks and saints appear without clothing, wearing, as the word suggests, only the sky.[149] While to be sky-clad is on one level a euphemism for "nakedness," it also evokes garments made of water, light, air, and clouds.[150] The airiness of cloth was itself a value held in particular esteem in medieval poetry; a lover's tunic is described as being as "clear as sky."[151] Moti Chandra cites a prescriptive work dating to the twelfth century on the ideal dress of Indian kings. It emphasizes color and texture, particularly the "lightness" of the cloth: "It is enjoined that in spring the king should wear garments made of cotton and linen—smooth, beautiful, light (*sūksma*) and thin (*virala*)."[152] Phyllis Granoff notes that

Sanskrit poets described the clothing of heroes and heroines not as thickly brocaded silk but as the rays of light emanating from gems or as "wisps of clouds that veil the beauty of the heavens."[153] The seventh-century court poet Bana clothed his hero, Harsha, in a "thin upper garment spangled with worked stars, like the round world with its surrounding ether cloudless and full of stars."[154]

Other poets too drew a connection between the sheer effect of white muslin cloth and the cool glow of moonlight. The Indo-Persian poet Amir Khusrau praised the cotton textiles of central India as resembling "the skin of the moon removed by the executioner star." He wrote that the textiles were "so transparent and light that it looks as if one is in no dress at all but has only smeared the body with pure water."[155] Annemarie Schimmel notes that cloth could be so thin that it was vulnerable even to rays of light. She cites a Persian idea "still current among some people . . . that moonlight is dangerous for linen and cotton, because it wears it out. Thus the beloved with his moon-like face causes the lover to grow skinny, as though he were a threadbare rag."[156]

Thin fabric could also set off the light and the radiance of the skin below. Within Sanskrit manuals on kingship, the rituals of dressing and spreading sandalwood paste and oils on the body were as important as the fine speech and elegant comportment of the king. Inner righteousness manifested in corporeal traits such as "solidity" and "height," but also vitality and bodily "luster."[157] The painters of the Mughal imperial workshop similarly used the cloth to emphasize both the luster and the potency of the body underneath. In paintings of Mughal noblemen, the sheer garments adhere to the arms, shoulders, and broad chests of the figures (see fig. 1.16). The thin fabric gives a glimpse of body hair, suggesting the figure's virility since the "bristling" of hair was a sign of arousal.[158] Black marks appear on the underarms of many figures. This could be caused by sweat but could also indicate the presence of musk, a perfume derived from the secretions of the musk deer.[159] Musk could be dark or black in color.[160] The dark marks of musk on the white *jāma* may give visual form to the presence of a scent. These markings on the cotton thus link together the lists of perfumes with those of fine cloths seen in the *varnaka* texts: perfuming and dressing were interrelated acts and musk applied to the body was enhanced in its potency when it infused a textile's fibers.

The way painters rendered the textiles also connected the cloth to bodily pleasures. In a portrait of Emperor Jahangir, the artist Bichitr has avoided pungent sweat and hair and has instead given the

FIG. 1.25 Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaykh to Kings (detail). Bichitr, Mughal Empire. From the St. Petersburg Album. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1615–18. 9 15/16 in. (25.3 cm) × 7 1/16 in. (18 cm). Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1942.15a.

emperor smooth skin and rounded limbs. This painting is most famous for its pious message—the emperor is depicted as looking beyond earthly kings in favor of Sufi saints (fig. 1.25). The cloth of Jahangir's *jāma* glides over the emperor's shoulders and pulls away slightly to allow a glimpse of the contours of his chest and his slightly protruding belly. Around his wrists, the cloth pools into folds that echo Jahangir's bracelets. The calm stillness of the painting and the raised stature of the figure of Jahangir lend the emperor's figure a sculptural monumentality. The glow of the emperor's skin, set off by the coolness of the white cloth, however, asserts that he is both lustrous and alive.

Persian names for muslin suggest that cotton cloth, like a spray of water, cooled the body in the heat of the summer. Fine muslin from Bengal came to be known as *āb-i rawān*, or "running water," and *shabnam*, meaning "evening dew," which conjures the thin film of water that gathers on the grass at dusk.[161] Cotton was an ideal fabric for hot days. Cotton fibers swell to absorb water when wet, providing a refreshing layer on the body and a reservoir of wetness in the months of dry summer heat. Cotton was also likened to water in Mughal paintings. Early modern South Asian experiences of drought and famine gave viewers an appreciation for visual representations of abundant water.[162] Depictions of cotton cloth worked in concert with actual renderings of water to cool a painting's temperature, to collect the feeling of water and preserve it on the page. Washes of white pigment representing cotton cloth dampened the colors behind them; the rippling hems of cotton garments evoked rainclouds and waves. As one corner of a painting reveals, both water poured from a jug and a wisp of a cotton shawl are represented as the same translucent wash of white (fig. 1.26a).

The refreshing feeling of cotton may have aligned with Akbar's other efforts to create devices for air cooling and refrigeration in India's hot climate. Abu'l Fazl credits Akbar with having invented a use for saltpeter (a component of gunpowder), upon whose explosion water would become cool. Perhaps more intriguing is the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*'s discussion of hollow bamboo structures that were stuffed with the fragrant *khas* plant (a type of grass, *Chrysopogon zizanioides*, or vetiver): "There is a fragrant root, very cool, which is called *khas*. By His Majesty's command, it became common to make huts of

FIG. 1.26A Daʿud Receives a Robe of Honor from Munʿim Khan (detail). Attributed to Hiranand, Mughal Empire. From an *Akbarnāma*. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1596–1600. 9⅜ in. (23.8 cm) × 4 13/16 in. (12.3 cm). Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1952.31.

bamboo frames (*naibast-hā*) stuffed with it. When water is thrown on it, winter seems to arrive in the midst of summer."[163] The root of the *khas* plant, when wet, has a scent like myrrh.[164] While Akbar likely did not invent this use for *khas* grass, its efficacy at cooling a room is well-known. Mats and hand-held fans made of *khas* are still doused in water and used as cooling devices in South Asia. Akbar's air-cooling system operated not only through temperature but also by wafting a refreshing smell through the air. Just as these furnishings could relieve the heat, so too could scented, wet cloths, and their representations in paintings, provide coolness during the hot summer months.

The Politics of Cloth and the Robe of Submission The significance of cloth extended beyond the private pleasures of the emperor and court.[165] The text of the *Akbarnāma* suggests a political connection between cloth and the practice of truth-telling. The treachery of Daʿud Khan Karrani, the last ruling sultan of Bengal, for instance, was given visual representation in textile terms. In the late sixteenth century, Bengal was governed by Sulaiman Khan Karrani, a ruler of Afghan descent who recognized Akbar as emperor but sought to expand his territory. After the death of Sulaiman in 1572 and the rise of his son, Daʿud, Akbar's armies advanced to subdue Bengal. A treaty in March 1575 temporarily suspended fighting, and Daʿud submitted to the Mughal general Munʿim Khan. In October 1575, Munʿim Khan died, and in the uncertain time that followed Daʿud reassembled an army to recapture Bengal. After his second defeat, Daʿud was beheaded and his head was sent to Emperor Akbar.[166] The narrative text of the *Akbarnāma* described how Daʿud's father, Sulaiman, had at least acted as though he were faithful to Akbar, while quietly disobeying him. Daʿud, on the other hand, immediately rebelled after his father's death. While Sulaiman pretended to be loyal, his son had torn off the hypocritical appearance.[167] The semblance of a subordinate's submission could not guarantee fealty but could at least keep the peace. Daʿud, despite the emperor's initial forgiveness, had ripped the bond of allegiance.

A scene from an *Akbarnāma* dated to 1595–1600 and attributed to Hiranand depicts the early, temporary submission of Daʿud's forces to Munʿim Khan and the mandatory robing ceremony that symbolically solidified the Mughal army's initial victory over Bengal (fig. 1.26b). In the scene depicted, Munʿim Khan, seated in front of a tented structure, has given Daʿud a gold-brocaded silk garment, a gift meant to incorporate the recipient into the ruler's service.[168] Standing at the edge of the carpet, Daʿud slips one arm into the long sleeve of the robe that marks his submission. The depiction of Daʿud is one of very few active portrayals of what is often described as a merely transactional occasion of gifting a robe of honor.[169] It is also perhaps the only time in which donning a robe of honor is shown as a punishment for the recipient rather than a great accolade. The painter catches the scene in motion by showing how Daʿud uses his free hand to hold the fabric of the coat as he slides his other arm through it. While Munʿim Khan looks toward Daʿud with his hand outstretched, Daʿud looks away, his eyes focused on a far-off point. Daʿud is a figure of active resistance. The failure of his hand to appear, his awkward pose, and Hiranand's choice to render Daʿud mid-action seem to suggest his reluctance to fully embody the mantle of his submission.

FIG. 1.26B Daʿud Receives a Robe of Honor from Munʿim Khan. Attributed to Hiranand, Mughal Empire. From an *Akbarnāma*. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1596–1600. 9⅜ in. (23.8 cm) × 4 13/16 in. (12.3 cm). Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1952.31.

It is not just his face that resists but the fabric itself. The painter has rendered the density of the silk fabric, woven with gold threads, by painting the thick fold of the sleeve below Daʿud's covered right hand. Although it is not immediately apparent, Daʿud is layering the silk robe over a cotton *chākdār jāma* so thin his curling chest hair can be seen through the cloth. The attendants who stand behind Daʿud wear these same thin, white, translucent *jāma*s. Outside of the tented enclosure, three additional men, who, like Daʿud's attendants, wear Afghan *kulāhdār* turbans (turbans wrapped over caps), also wear white *jāma*s with the four-pointed *chākdār* edges. The painter repeatedly draws a contrast in the image between the translucency of Daʿud's muslin cotton *jāma* and the opacity of the silk and fur garments worn by the other figures in the painting. If we read the clothes through their geographies—the silk robe symbolizing the Mughal court and Daʿud's cotton *jāma* suggesting his kingdom in Bengal—Daʿud has donned the Mughal robe only as a superficial layer and retains his status as the ruler of Bengal by continuing to wear the thin cloth of his realm beneath.

The Imperial Incorporation of Local Textiles In the painting of Daʿud, military defeat is represented as a masking of regional identity with the silk robes of the empire. More often, however, the appearance of regional cloth in Mughal paintings signaled the emperor's efforts to integrate the diverse empire, giving the patronage of cloth a political dimension. Swapping clothes was a persistent metaphor for the kinds of cultural and textual translations that Akbar commissioned at his court. Abu'l Fazl described a Persian translation of a Sanskrit mathematical text, the *Līlāwatī*, as having "lost its Hindu veil, and received a Persian garb."[170] More concretely, the physical body of the emperor and Akbar's corporeal practices—from his vegetarianism to his schedule of sexual abstinence—were not eccentric affectations but a central part of the political philosophy of bodily regulation that Akbar adapted from Islamic ethical treatises, Rajput princely traditions, and Hindu religious texts. As Rosalind O'Hanlon has shown, the emperor's bodily fitness was a physical manifestation of the good health of the empire.[171]

The participation of the emperor in the textile trade also led to the health of the economy. By purchasing and receiving textiles on the one hand, and deploying them as gifts on the other, the king acted as what C. A. Bayly calls "the great engine of redistribution" responsible for "the propagation of diversity in patterns of consumption—of cloths, fruits, spices, grains."[172] In these ways, textiles worn on the body of the emperor may have symbolized the physical reach and economic well-being of the empire. The *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* praises how Akbar did not attempt to establish a monolithic imperial style in textiles but sought to bolster existing specialties. Abu'l Fazl notes that Emperor Akbar "improved" the department of textiles: he had the finest *tūs* shawls dyed in new colors beyond their natural black, white, and brown. He had the "widths" of textiles extended, so that a single coat could be made from a length of fabric. Abu'l Fazl wrote that Emperor Akbar also "pays much attention" to a number of fabrics that were regional specialties of pre-Mughal India.[173] The author makes special mention of *chīnt*, which was a painted or printed cotton cloth. He lists *zardozī*, a fabric worked with golden threads, as among the textiles that Akbar improved more generally. This section on Akbar's "improvements" is

distinctive from the section in which Abu'l Fazl writes that "skillful masters and workmen have settled in this country to teach people an improved system of manufacture."[174] Evidently, Akbar had not replaced current woven goods with the products of foreign master weavers but "improved" the existing arts, supported them, and given care so that various regions strengthened their existing skills. It does not seem accidental that Akbar's patronage often emphasized regions of his empire, like Kashmir and Bengal, that had only recently come under Mughal control.

By the same measure, paintings of the emperor donning regional textiles solidified not only the Mughal emperor's visual but also his physical conquest of newly incorporated territories. In at least three *Akbarnāma* paintings celebrating Akbar's military victories, the emperor appears to be wearing the defeated region's characteristic fabrics. A painting from a late sixteenth-century *Akbarnāma*, for instance, depicts the emperor receiving news of his army's victory at Gogunda in Rajasthan (fig. 1.27). In the painting, the seated emperor wears a tie-dyed cotton *bandhanī* waist-tie on top of a silk *patkā*. The techniques to make *bandhanī* fabric appeared very early in western India and references to this tie-dyed cloth can be found in the Gujarati *varnaka* texts.[175] Steven Cohen has

FIG. 1.27 Akbar Receives News of the Victory at Gogunda (detail). Attributed to Manohar, Mughal Empire. From an *Akbarnāma*. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1596–1600. 10⅜ in. (26.3 cm) × 5⅝ in. (14.2 cm). Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1960.28.

argued that the Mughal emperors Akbar and Jahangir may have prominently displayed *bandhanī* textiles in their attire and in their portraiture to symbolize the Mughal allegiance through marriage to the Rajput kingdom of Amber (fig. 1.28).[176] In this case, the inclusion of a *bandhanī* textile in the image of Akbar receiving news of the victory at Gogunda may reflect both military victory and a familial connection. The battle of Gogunda was fought between Akbar's Mughal forces and the armies of the Rajput principality of Mewar, and the Mughal forces were led in the campaign by Raja Man Singh I, the ruler of Amber.

Akbar also included "*bandhnūn*" cloth (a variant of *bandhanī*) among the textiles that he gave his special notice. The name *bandhanī* comes from the Sanskrit word *bandhana*, which means "binding, tying, or fastening."[177] In contemporary practice, the cloth is created by placing heated fabric over a series of nails to make raised bumps, which are then tied very tightly using a continuous thread. The cloth is then submerged in dye. The nubs that have been tied are not exposed to the dye, and, when released, they are the color of the original cloth. At times, the small points are untied just enough to take a second color of dye. At the end of the labor-intensive process, when all of the ties are removed after dyeing, the tied points form a pattern of hundreds of dots.[178] By wearing recognizably Rajasthani *bandhanī* textiles, the Mughal emperor visually reinforced the subjugation of this region to the sovereignty of the empire but also demonstrated his support for its crafts.

In a similar vein, a painting commemorating celebrations after the momentous defeat of Baz Bahadur of Malwa depicts Akbar wearing a translucent white shawl whose pattern of black diamond shapes seems to float on top of the cloth (fig. 1.29). The way that the pattern hovers over the thin shawl suggests a very fine cloth that has been embellished with the addition of thicker red and black threads through either loom weaving or embroidery. Within the kingdom of Malwa, artisans from the city of Chanderi were famous for their production of diaphanous textiles that had been worked with a needle.[179] In the 1630s, the governor of Malwa sent "several thousand bales" of a particular kind of cloth known as *do dāmī* fabric to Shah Jahan, which a court chronicler, Muhammad Sali Kanbu, lauded for its "fineness" and "delicate quality." "In terms of refinement [*nafāsat*] no other kind of white cloth in India matches it. [The fabric] is used for making special summer dresses for the emperor."[180] Continuing into the second half of the seventeenth century, at least, there was a renowned factory at Chanderi producing the *do dāmī* cloth, which Jadunath

FIG. 1.28 Portrait of Emperor Jahangir with a straight sword. Balchand, Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1620. 7½ in. (19.1 cm) × 4 in. (10.4 cm). Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, CBL In 45.1.

FIG. 1.29 Dancers from Malwa perform before Akbar. Kesav the Elder and Dharmdas, Mughal Empire. From the *Akbarnāma*. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1590–95. 13 in. (32.9 cm) × 9 13/16 in. (25 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IS.2:16–1896.

بازبهادر بدست آورده بود از خاصیت و ناطق تا تمام حرمها و پاتران و لولیان بنظر اشرف گذرانیدند
و اینحضرت بموجب مرحمت عامه قبول نموده بعضی را باو عنایت فرمودند و چهار روز در سارنگپور توقف
فرموده روز خرداد ششم خرداد ماه الهی موافق شنبه دویم رمضان

بنظر تشرف درآوردن بازبهادر خان طرح گیسو کلان عل دمرده اپس ۹۶ زنان و پاتران بازبهادر را

1 B

Sarkar defines as a "flowered muslin, the flowers worked with a needle."[181] In the painting, Akbar appears to have donned the *do dāmī* textiles of Chanderi as he celebrated his conquest over Malwa.

Likewise, in a painting of Akbar being entertained by Azim Khan in Dipalpur in Punjab, Akbar wears an unusual, patterned garment with diamond-shaped, geometricized flowers in different colors (fig. 1.30). While it is difficult to pinpoint the textile in the painting with certainty, it bears a strong resemblance to the *phulkārī* textiles of Punjab and to the embroidered textiles (*sozanī*) made throughout the neighboring areas of Afghanistan and Central Asia. Although the fully embroidered *phulkārī* textiles that have been made in the last one hundred years would be too thick to wear as a garment, the bright colors and geometric designs suggest that another textile still retaining this characteristic coloring and design was to be found in Punjab.

In each of these cases, the textiles depicted were not the most valuable cloths available in the luxury markets. Some were produced from cotton cloth and even if they were elaborately dyed were still relatively inexpensive. The *bandhanī* textile grew out of expertise in tie-dye. The patterning on a *do dāmī* textile from Chanderi came not from a complex loom setup but rather from the fine spinning of the threads, the delicate but simple weaving, and the embellishment with floral designs. The *phulkārī* textiles of Punjab were, and are, produced through the skillful needlework of hand embroiderers. Yet the monetary value of the textiles seems to have been less significant than the political interaction that their presence implied. Bayly argued that transactions in cloth in the Mughal Empire amounted to a "political discourse upholding the legitimacy of the ruler and pledging the attachment of subjects."[182] By wearing the clothing of the regions he had conquered, Akbar was not only trumpeting his success but acknowledging the political obligations that such a mantle implied.

FIG. 1.30 Akbar and Azim Khan at Dipalpur. Jagan, Sur Das, and Madhav, Mughal Empire. From the *Akbarnāma*. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1590–95. 12 11/16 in. (32.4 cm) × 7 5/16 in. (18.6 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IS.2:94–1896.

The Wonder of Dyes The seventeenth century in Hindustan was a moment when the diversity of fibers, textures, colors, and manufactures of regional sites were gaining importance rather than becoming standardized. This creativity can be seen in dye

colors as well. As the list of colors in Emperor Akbar's wardrobe suggests, the elite of Mughal India welcomed inventive dye mixtures that achieved evocative colors. This preference for vibrant hues is corroborated by a set of dye recipes contained within the *Khulāsat al-Mujarrabāt* (Quintessence of Prescriptions), a book of medical treatments and artisanal recipes from seventeenth- or eighteenth-century northern India. Other chapters in the volume address treatments for horses, ailments of the ear, recipes for perfumes, and instructions for marbling paper.[183] The *Khulāsat al-Mujarrabāt* provides dye recipes likely dictated from an artisan—as evidenced by the recipes' very practical advice for estimating quantities and pounding and straining materials.[184]

The dye recipes frequently call for turmeric and safflower, *kacchā* dyes that produced vivid colors but were also liable to lose their color quickly. Dye analysis of Mughal silk velvet textiles has demonstrated that dyers used these short-lived materials of turmeric and safflower to achieve what were once tart orange colors and pulsing pinks on these precious cloths.[185] Although these textiles were among the most valuable in the empire, the dyes deployed to color them have long since faded. If this chapter has explored the metaphorical ways that cloths and fruits overlapped in poetic descriptions, the dyes used on these velvet fabrics offer a material instance of how a textile's color could be almost as perishable as an edible delicacy.

Dye materials could also be transformational. Among the dye colors in the *Khulāsat al-Mujarrabāt* are two recipes for a brilliant red color called *rang Akbarī*, which may have been named for the famous emperor. One of the recipes calls for a local red seed, dried mango juice from the Deccan, and *iksīr*, or elixir, a component used by alchemists in their attempts to forge silver and gold.[186] The dyer kept the components of his special elixir a secret.[187] Whereas "alchemy" dye in Europe referred disparagingly to an "uncontrollable" mixture of colorants, this dyer's recipe for the color of the great emperor includes an elixir to achieve the richness of the hue.[188]

Set in among instructions for making perfumes and medicines, these dye recipes, like the many cloth names in the Gujarati *varnaka* lists and the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, evoke the wonder that can be found in the silkworm's creation of a cocoon, in the spinner's ability to turn raw cotton into slender threads, and in the dyer's capacity to add color to the world.[189] With their deep knowledge of local ecology and their sensitivity to the chemistry of water and fibers, master spinners, dyers, bleachers, and weavers can be seen as engaged in almost scientific practices. Yet in their capacity to conjure the natural world in their colors and textures, the work of textile makers was as much a feat of illusionism as the works of any of the manuscript painters in the imperial workshop. Perhaps this was why Akbar honored Ustād Ramdas Rangrez, the man who could alchemically produce brass-colored silk and water-colored cotton.

Chapter 2

THE TELL-TALE TEXTILE

Fabric and Emotions in Mughal Hindustan

In 1605, the wife of the soon-to-be emperor Jahangir took her own life. A grief-stricken Prince Salim, as he was then known, wrote, "I passed my days without deriving pleasure in any way from life or living." When Emperor Akbar heard of his son's sorrow, he composed what his son described as "a letter of condolence so compassionate and loving and sent me a robe and turban he had taken from his own head and wrapped up. This display of favor cast water on the fire of my grief and calmed my turmoil."[1] In addition to a sympathetic letter, Prince Salim was touched by the physical gifts that his elderly father had sent—the robe and the turban he "had taken from his own head and wrapped up." Prince Salim had only recently reconciled with his father in 1604 after a five-year rebellion.[2] In many cases, the removal and gifting of a turban could be a statement of political submission; in this case, however, it communicated concern and affection.[3] Akbar gave immediacy to his letter of condolence by sending his own turban in the shape it had left his body. Though the emperor was far away, the garment conjured his presence and "calmed" the prince's turmoil. When Prince Salim ascended to the throne later that year as Emperor Jahangir (r. 1605–27), he similarly deployed textiles as a means of giving material form to his subjective emotions.

In this chapter, I focus on the earliest-known imperial garment that has been directly linked to the Mughal court. This unique object encapsulates the many layers of significance that a gift of a textile might convey (fig. 2.1). The robe, crafted from Persian silk fabric and patterned with imagery of male and female lovers, is thought to have been given by Emperor Jahangir (then Prince Salim) to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner; it has reputedly been held in the Rajasthani city of Bikaner since the late sixteenth century. The Bikaner garment reveals to a rare degree the full extent of what a textile object could communicate. With its figural imagery and its passages of woven text, the silk object managed to convey not just the power or grandeur of the imperial family but the ambivalence of the relationship between the emperor-to-be and Raja Rai Singh.

The Bikaner robe is a singular object not only because it is the sole garment from the early Mughal period, and one with a probable imperial provenance, to have survived in India but also because it communicates in ways that are most familiar to historians, namely through pictures and language. Sometimes unpacking an example that is overt in its ability to communicate meaning can raise salient questions about other, more reticent objects whose stories cannot be unspooled so directly. These quieter things may require additional context, and the act of interpreting them may be speculative. In this chapter, I place the Bikaner garment, the pinnacle of luxury and legibility, alongside seemingly simpler alternatives. I use textual accounts of gift-giving and analyses of paintings showing textiles to account for how objects, like the robe, were used. In doing so, it becomes possible to appreciate the wide possibilities for meaning that gifts of garments could hold. The example of the Bikaner robe helps to illuminate textiles given and received by a range of figures: a loyal Mughal nobleman, a recalcitrant Rajput king, and relations of the imperial family. The power relationships established by the textiles vary widely, as do their contexts of reception. Yet the cloths, and their representations in text

and paintings, provide an opportunity to look across Mughal elite society and identify the alliances and disruptions that fabrics forged.

Although a description and image of the Bikaner garment were published in 1950, neither the inscriptions woven into the cloth nor the visual content of the fabric has been the subject of previous interpretation or analysis.[4] The robe is tentatively associated with a letter from Prince Salim to Raja Rai Singh. The contents of the letter express emotions that are simultaneously formal and personal—qualities that are echoed in the pattern and inscriptions on the robe itself.[5] The figural images that make up the textile's pattern align it with tropes of distance and longing, as the female and male figures seem to gaze at one another from compartments that resemble open windows.

OVERLEAF, FIG. 2.1
Robe given to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner. Cloth: Iran, silk, complex weave, sixteenth century. Garment: Mughal Empire, late sixteenth century. In the collection of Ganga Government Museum, Bikaner, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan, India. 311 B.M.

The Bikaner robe is also overlaid in its form and inscription with doubts about Raja Rai Singh's loyalty. The garment was given to the elderly Rajput ruler, who, late in his life, had begun to keep himself at a distance from the Mughal court. Subsequent textile gifts were accompanied by letters from Jahangir requesting and then demanding the presence of the Bikaner royal family at the imperial court in Agra. The Persian inscription on the robe contains references to the textile as a gift but also carries double meanings that alternate between suggestions of loyalty and betrayal. Through its precious fabric and its artistic and poetic content, the robe worked to mediate the contentious connection between the future Mughal ruler and a regional Rajput prince.

In a regime that depended on faraway loyalties and expressed political and military demands in a warm language of emotion, textiles like this robe helped to integrate polities, communicate bonds of affection, and test loyalties. Cloth was a medium with unique potential to communicate across distance. In its pliable texture, easy mobility, and intimate usage, cloth came to express a range of human sentiments from humor and romantic love to mystical rapture and political allegiance.[6] Stuffed with fragrant flowers or woven with messages of adoration or coercion, textiles could bear a lover's, a parent's, or a ruler's embrace. Peter Stallybrass has written of textiles as bearers of subjective experience, pointing to the fact that creases in the sleeves of garments were known in nineteenth-century Britain as "memories."[7] Those who participated in Mughal textile exchanges realized that garments bore the memories—both the tangible creases and the sentimental attachments—of the people who wore them. Textiles usually enter our political vocabulary as metaphors of and accomplices in secrecy—as veils and cloaks of the truth. Honesty can be expressed as an unfurling, unwrapping, an undressing of facts. In the field of seventeenth-century Mughal textiles, however, it was fabrics and garments—the shrouds, veils, curtains, and cloaks—that bore the straight truth, unmasked the killer, and told the tales of the ally's soul.

Textiles and the Distribution of Care

The silken garment that Jahangir sent to Bikaner was a robe of honor, a largely symbolic gift that was meant to secure the allegiance of a royal subject, as in the previous chapter's example of the robe for Daʿud (see fig. 1.26b). Textiles were part of the shared language of mercantile exchange and courtly gift-giving in the early modern world.[8] European, Chinese, and Arab travel narratives recount the importance of arriving at a new place with robes and cloth for gifts.[9]

In Arabic, a robe of honor was called a *khilʿat*, a word for something that has been passed on or for a garment that has been "cast off." In Persian and at the Mughal court, robes of honor were known as *sarāpā*, which means "head-to-foot" and makes reference to the ensemble of honored clothing that included not just robes but turbans, daggers, and sashes.[10] Robes of honor were a means of communicating authority. In the ideal form of this practice, the giver of the *khilʿat*, a figure with religious or political power, bestowed robes of honor upon his or her subordinates.[11] In donning the *khilʿat*, the recipient accepted the authority of the giver and pledged his or her allegiance to that person. Participants in early modern courtly life also understood that giving a robe of honor could be as much a monetary transfer as a symbolic act initiated by a ruler to signal approval and assert authority over a vassal. At the Ottoman court, the value of the gold woven into the fabric of the *khilʿat* would sometimes be embroidered onto a tag sewn into the garment, so that the robe could be exchanged for cash at the treasury.[12] Robes of honor vacillated in Ottoman lands between their status as commodities and "charismatic" gifts, expressive of the emperor's intentions. Over time, Amanda Phillips writes, "the special becomes normal, the robes become currency rather than an expression of rare favour."[13]

Yet the idea that textiles could carry more personal messages with them was also well established by the early modern period. Textiles given by medieval Islamic rulers were often adorned with woven and embroidered inscriptions, called *tirāz*. The *tirāz* could include a blessing that would protect the garment's patron and its eventual owner, or the name of the site of the fine textile's production.[14] There also existed another, more sentimental tradition that existed in the Islamic world: the exchange of the more quotidian *mandīl* (*mindīl*), or handkerchief, which bore tender messages between lovers. Because of its use drying a lover's tears or wiping one's lips after drinking wine, the *mandīl* was an intrinsically tender gift. Some *mandīl*s had inscriptions written in the voice of the cloth itself, describing the lovesickness of its owner. One tenth-century Arabic text read: "I am the *mandīl* of a lover who never stopped / Drying with me his eyes of their tears // Then he gave me as a present to a girl he loves / Who wipes with me the wine from his lips."[15] When given as a gift between lovers, the *mandīl* carried indexes of feelings—the dampness of tears and the stains of the lips—across space and time. The confluence of the textile's use so close to the body and its messages of allegiance made the *mandīl* a potent object. At times, Mughal cloth exchanges seem to have revived the spirit of the *mandīl* as a political strategy. Texts, paintings, and textile objects themselves suggest that among the elite of the Mughal Empire, textiles could serve as idiosyncratic and personal gestures that expressed genuine feeling.

The interaction between Jahangir and Rai Singh, facilitated by a robe, was one of many instances of bestowing a textile that the future emperor would have had.[16] Within the *Jahāngīrnāma*, the account of Jahangir's twenty-two-year reign (1605–27), the emperor mentions gifting robes of honor nearly three hundred times. Presumably, this was a substantial undercount. Not only would there have been gifting occasions that never made it into his autobiography, but in many instances, multiple robes or textiles were bestowed at once, as can be seen in the array of fabrics at the weighing ceremony

for his son Khurram (fig. 2.2). For example, Jahangir often gave dozens of robes to all of the servants in his son's household, or to all of the women in another son's harem. Certain dignitaries were given many robes on occasions: forty-five to one *amīr* and fifteen to another.[17]

Emperor Jahangir made deliberate choices in his gifting of specific robes of honor. While his son and successor, Shah Jahan, sought to codify and make predictable the practices of gift-giving, Jahangir's gifting practices emerged from his actual preferences. As Stephan Popp writes: "the offerings he accepted were more those he personally liked, and the awards he gave were based on his own opinion."[18] He was also more specific in his gifts: he was singular in listing the names of the animals he was giving as gifts, noting that he gave an elephant called Bansi-badan to his son.[19] Jahangir accepted a diverse range of gifts from his noblemen, family members, and visiting ambassadors, including: "musk and agarwood, Chinese porcelain, sable coats, hunting dogs, a golden throne made by a European, 28 hawks and falcons, a young African elephant and a tame ibex."[20]

Accounts of Jahangir's reign beginning soon after his death and continuing up through the mid-twentieth century have cast the emperor, an admitted opium addict, as inconstant and weak. Recent historiography has come to regard Jahangir's more personal approach as part of his governing strategy. Without guaranteed dynastic succession, Mughal princes had to work strategically to build alliances throughout the empire by bringing together a diverse cadre of regional rulers, religious figures, and even poets, painters, and intellectuals within their households. Using "honors and rewards," Jahangir was particularly adept at wooing even the most disaffected personalities from across the empire.[21] Moreover, the small kindnesses, generosity, and gift-giving of the Mughal realm, what Farhat Hasan calls the "social communication" of the Mughal state, formed a much more important role in maintaining the empire through "intricate linkages" than accounts of a purely bureaucratic or extractive state have allowed.[22] Even Jahangir's autobiography, with its informal voice and subjective descriptions, was not merely the musings of an indulgent emperor,

FIG. 2.2 Emperor Jahangir weighing his son Khurram in gold and silver. Attributed to Manohar, Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1615–25. Page: 17 7/16 in. (44.3 cm) × 11 5/8 in. (29.5 cm). Image: 11 13/16 in. (30 cm) × 7 11/16 in. (19.6 cm). British Museum, London, 1948,1009,0.69.

as European travelers and later Mughal historians would have it, but a means by which the emperor publicized his governing philosophy throughout the empire.[23] This text, along with letters and "other media," seems to have "actually succeeded in legitimizing and sustaining his rule."[24] In these accounts, Jahangir emerges as intentionally specific in his emotions toward those around him, even sentimental, and attentive to the material world that he occupied.

In the *Jahāngīrnāma*, the various modifiers for the robes of honor often refer to their material value, such as "gold-brocaded" and "expensive." Yet many gifted garments are also described as being "private," or "personal," suggesting that they derived not from the imperial storehouse of generic *khilʿat* but from the emperor's own wardrobe, which was a gift that was much more valuable in its symbolism. On an almost yearly basis as winter approached, Jahangir gave warm robes to clothe his noblemen, and presumably water-resistant robes for the rainy season.[25] Jahangir also describes gifting sheepskin coats, fur, and "warm and soft" pashmina shawls in lieu of robes of honor, like the dove-gray shawl worn by a historical Sufi saint (see fig. 1.12). Jahangir drew particular attention to the specific feeling—the warmth and softness—of the shawls made from the finest goat hair and woven in Kashmir.[26] These gifts came with expressions of concern about the effects of the cold on his subjects and their need for warm winter clothing.[27]

While courtly robes and their fabrics bore symbolic meaning, they also retained a direct corporeal relationship as garments tailored to the shape of the body.[28] During Akbar's time, Abu'l Fazl gave a magical bent to the physical nature of *khilʿat*, writing: "I must mention, as a most curious sign of auspiciousness, that His Majesty's clothes becomingly fit every one whether he be tall or short, a fact which has hitherto puzzled many."[29] In claiming that the emperor's clothes magically fit whoever received them, Abu'l Fazl glossed over the intimate relationship between two differently shaped bodies established by the giving of *khilʿat* and made the gifting of a robe a miraculous, rather than corporeal, act. By contrast, Emperor Jahangir recounted the physicality of a nobleman's son, Yusuf Khan, who died while serving in the Deccan: "It had been heard that while he was in his *jagir* [home territory] he had become so fat that he got short of breath with the slightest movement or exertion. . . . When he was given a robe he couldn't even get it on and make a salute. All his limbs were trembling. . . . His servants put him in a palanquin and carried him home. No sooner had he arrived than he died."[30] The robe here is used as a standard of measuring the body of an ailing person whose illness made him too bloated to properly receive the emperor's clothes. While Akbar's historian imagined an ideal in which robes of honor were seamlessly transferred to a vassal, Jahangir, in his autobiographical text, expressed an awareness of his recipients' bodies.

Surprising moments emerge in Jahangir's autobiography when textiles get caught up in the mercurial ruler's overwhelming emotions. In one scene from 1615, an old military grandee is reprimanded at court for having fought against Jahangir in an insurrection.[31] The emperor writes, "Although he had committed major mistakes and I was perfectly justified in everything I had done to him, when he was brought into my presence and my eye fell upon him, I felt more embarrassed than he did. I pardoned all his shortcomings and gave him a shawl I had around my waist."[32] Far from a cool gesture of

investiture, Jahangir describes the gift of the shawl as the result of an "embarrassed" impulse in the presence of the senior nobleman, whom Jahangir described as "an old wolf of this everleading state."[33]

Jahangir gave particularly personal and empathetic robes of honor to the family of his beloved wife, Nur Jahan. Nur Jahan's father, Iʿtimad-ud-Dawla, served as a leading vizier in Jahangir's government and as a trusted advisor. Upon the death of Iʿtimad-ud-Dawla in 1622, as on the death of many other noblemen, Jahangir gave robes of honor to the deceased man's family as a way to signal the end of mourning. Jahangir recounts that after Iʿtimad-ud-Dawla's death, he "gave robes to forty-one of his sons and clansmen and twelve of his munshees and took them out of their mourning clothes."[34] Robes of honor were known to be transformational in a political sense, but by gifting new robes to replace the robes of grief, Jahangir made the *khilʿat* into a robe of healing.

Like his father, Jahangir saved his most personal, but also his most expensive, gifts for his family members. The gifts of robes for his sons could be given in person or in advance of their appearance at court. In May 1619, Jahangir's son Sultan Parvez requested "a royal nadiri to wear on the day he would pay homage." In addition to the requested *nādirī* (a style of sleeveless robe that Jahangir claimed to have invented), Jahangir also sent a turban and a "personal futa [prayer shawl]" with Sultan Parvez's agent.[35]

The emperor frequently directed gold-embroidered robes to his sons, the princes of the realm. These gifts of robes were so encrusted with gold thread that they functioned more as jewelry than as textiles. When Prince Khurram was promoted in rank and given the title Shah Jahan, meaning "king of the world," he received a "gold-embroidered charqab [a Timurid-style coat] edged with pearls on the collar, cuffs, and hem worth fifty thousand rupees."[36] Later in the month, Nur Jahan gave Shah Jahan an "expensive" robe of honor in addition to a *nādirī* "adorned with jeweled flowers and precious pearls."[37] Preciousness could also be mixed with auspicious meaning. In June 1617, Jahangir sent Shah Jahan "a royal nadiri [sleeveless coat], its equal in expensive gold embroidery has not been sewn in my establishment before." The bearer of the gift was instructed to mention that this garment "had the distinction" of having been the coat that Jahangir was wearing when Prince Khurram led the Mughal army to the Deccan.[38] The symbolism of the robe came not only from its exquisite embroidery but also from the emperor's memory of his son's military prowess.

Within the Mughal Empire, other figures beyond the emperor also gave robes of honor.[39] Jahangir's wife, Nur Jahan, gifted robes to Shah Jahan. Princess Jahanara, Jahangir's granddaughter, also gave official gifts.[40] Moreover, throughout regional kingdoms, noble circles, and Sufi religious communities, gifts of robes circulated as a means of honoring those who had done a service, incorporating those who had become allies, or connecting, across linear time, to those who would carry on a religious teaching. From the memoir of Mirza Nathan, a Mughal officer serving Islam Khan, the governor in Bengal, it is clear that many of the practices described in the *Jahāngīrnāma* were replicated further down the imperial hierarchy. For instance, it was not only Akbar and Jahangir who gave robes or turbans to those in mourning. Upon the death of his father, Mirza

Nathan also received from the governor of Bengal robes of honor "to relieve him of his sorrow."[41]

Mirza Nathan's accounts suggest the frequency with which gifts of robes were bestowed and a sense of the performative rituals of their reception. Mirza Nathan often describes receiving robes of honor after a sumptuous dinner. This took place in a prescribed order, as illustrated on the occasion of Mirza Nathan's appointment to serve as governor in Bukainagar. When the feast was finished, Islam Khan, his host, sprinkled rosewater. After that, he gave the gift of a robe of honor. At these in-person robing ceremonies, the gift was given on a full belly in an atmosphere scented with roses.[42] As Avinoam Shalem writes in the context of medieval gifting practices, the feast and the scent of roses were a way to elevate "the specific event from the continuous flow of time by awakening the beholders' senses."[43] These are not the only vivid aspects of Mirza Nathan's account. While robes were significant, they were also given alongside other living things: Mirza Nathan received a hawk and a sparrow-hawk from the Mughal governor of Bengal, along with elephants and well-bred Iraqi and Turkish horses.[44]

Mirza Nathan's autobiography also informs us of gifts given between friends to offer support and kindness. At one point, a fire broke out at Mirza Nathan's residence while he was socializing nearby. He returned that evening to find all of his property burned and destroyed. Writing in the third person, he recounts: "He did not find any of the things of his wardrobe. The bejewelled robes, and the bejewelled instruments were blown away by the fire of the gunpowder of the arsenal which was close to the wardrobe. . . . The Mirza had many bejewelled caps. Out of these, seven were found in the ashes of the wardrobe. The jewels and the pearls of these caps were burnt and only the gold remained."[45] When friends approached him with gifts of money and cloth, he writes that he "did not accept these things from any of them, but in deference to their sentiments, he accepted one article of low price from each of them, and returned the rest." He makes an exception for gifts from two men. The first was "Shaykh Hansiwal, who was a very sincere friend of the Mirza and who never kept anything but lawful property." Mirza Nathan accepts twenty yards of what he describes as *bāfta*, or simple woven cloth, along with two hundred rupees. Mirza Nathan is touched by the fact that the second friend, Mirza Maʿsum Khafi, "personally came to the house of the Mirza to inquire and to console him" and sent to Mirza Nathan nine lengths of what is interestingly described as "valuable coarse cloth and a pair of Lahuri blankets of the size of five yards." Despite not having a fine texture, these gifts were still valued. The gifts came with a message that "the object of his [Khafi's] visit (to Nathan) was that the things sent by him might kindly be accepted by the Mirza and their friendship strengthened."[46]

A *khilʿat* is typically regarded as a robe that transforms an independent person into a ruler's subject, or a teacher's pupil into a disciple. Jahangir's and Mirza Nathan's accounts of lived practices expand our understanding of the *khilʿat*'s many purposes. It could be an object of seasonal comfort in cold or rainy weather, or a soft shawl that echoed the embarrassed forgiveness of the emperor. It could be a gift given out of concern by a friend. At its most personal, a gifted textile could "cast water on the fire" of a son's grief and restore a sense of calm in the world.

Letters, Cloth, and the Movement of the Mughal Postal System In addition to physical gifts, courtly letter-writing in the Mughal Empire also sought to shorten the sense of distance by communicating in a warm language of emotion. Emma Flatt and Ali Anooshahr have shown that Persianate letter-writing in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century South Asia was often conducted in a language of love and affection, replete with metaphors of friendship and romantic longing. Although these formulations were stylized and generic, often deriving from manuals for letter-writing, letters metaphorically became stand-ins for the absent friend or beloved. According to letter-writing conventions, upon receipt of a message from someone of a higher rank, a suggested response was that one had "found perfect calm upon seeing the beauty of the face of your letter." Long-awaited letters from a superior were likened to welcome changes in the weather, "like the morning breeze."[47] Flatt argues that the imagined, sensorially rich references to proximity were not merely a "flourish, but actually an attempt to constitute an alternative reality" where distance could eventually be overcome.[48] The recurrent language of affection helped forge "emotional communities" across vast and widening domains.

Even letters sent from the emperor contained messages that moved between the formal and the personal. A letter from then Prince Salim that may have accompanied the Bikaner robe at the time of its gifting helps establish its date of receipt as November 1597.[49] The letter begins with a formula of encomiums praising Raja Rai Singh as the "choicest of the grandees of the stable Empire," the "leader of the nobles" who is "worthy of overwhelming regards and deserving of unrestrained boons." As a "token of affection," Rai Singh is requested to either send his sons to the imperial court or aid in a current military campaign so that Rai Singh, the "right hand of the Empire," can receive from the emperor Akbar a higher military ranking and commensurate monetary and land rewards.[50]

The Bikaner records show that Jahangir often sent robes of honor to Rai Singh when he expected something in return. A letter sent in 1602 evoked the actual texture of an accompanying textile gift sent to the raja. In an imperial dictate that requests more communication from Rai Singh ("he should, henceforth, contrary to the past, always be sending his letters"), Prince Salim asked Rai Singh to relinquish claims on a "piece of ruby" that Rai Singh "unknowingly purchased" from a jeweler who had been carrying the ruby to the court. After offering compensation if Rai Singh "should hand over the ruby," the letter mentions that "a private soft silk robe is sent herewith."[51] This letter, otherwise full of directives, captures the feeling of a cloth on the ruler's skin. It brings out the material presence of a "soft silk robe" and the subjective experience of wearing it.

In the 1597 letter, Prince Salim conveyed a second, very specific request: "The exalted mind and elegant disposition" of Prince Salim "is generally inclined to 'cheetah'-hunting." "Taking this into consideration," Raja Rai Singh "should send (us) as many of the best 'cheetahs' as available." The text then singles out the cheetah "Nīlkanth" by name and asks that this cheetah be sent to court with the servant who has brought the message. The letter then states that a "private cloak" has been sent with the messenger, as though to make up for the loss of the animal.[52] The text moves between the strict protocols of imperial language to the personal desires of the imperial prince, who has a particular liking for the cheetah Nīlkanth, whose name means "blue jay" or "blue-throated."[53]

FIG. 2.3 Cases for official letters. Possibly Hyderabad. Painted leather lined with silk, ca. eighteenth century. Flap closed 8½–9½ in. (21.6–24.13 cm) × 4–4⅛ in. (10.16–10.4 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IM.234 to 238–1923.

The request for the cheetah makes vivid what could otherwise seem to be a generic imperial interaction. The letter also suggests that this gift of the robe is personal and deliberate. It comes with the descriptor "private," suggesting that it came from the prince's own collection.

The particular arrangement of Mughal mail also shaped the role of textiles as a means of communication. The Mughal postal system (known as *dāk-chaukī*) relied upon the swiftness of humans and horses to convey information across space. As it developed during Akbar's reign, the system was comprised of relay stations (*chaukīs*) spaced out at a distance of about nine to fifteen miles along the main intercity routes of the empire; in hilly areas, between Delhi and Kabul, for instance, the stations were spaced more closely together.[54] Each station along the route employed both specially trained runners who traveled on foot and two horses to carry mounted messengers. The foot runners and the horses raced with messages in a relay system, passing off the imperial mail to a fresh courier at each *chaukī*. In the most efficient form of this postal system, foot runners could convey a message 160 miles in twenty-four hours, although the average speed was likely half that. The cavalry could traverse 225 miles in twenty-four hours, managing to travel from Bengal to Agra in just seven days.[55] Letters were carried in hollow bamboo tubes (called *nalwās*) or leather cases (fig. 2.3); the emperor enclosed his highest-status *farmāns* (official decrees) in gold boxes.[56] Irfan Habib quotes a 1644 account suggesting that it was not just letters that were sent by *dāk-chaukī* but also perishable fruit: an official imperial request (*yasāwul*) from Aurangabad asked for pomegranates to be sent by *dāk-chaukī* from a location eighty-five miles away.[57]

Textiles were participants in the relay of messages and belongings, both as the medium of letter-writing itself and as accompanying gifts. A seventeenth-century *farmān* sent from Emperor Shah Jahan to Raja Jai Singh of Amber demonstrates how a textile could be both an object and a bearer of a message (fig. 2.4). Materially, the letter is written on a ground of cotton cloth that has been smoothed with a binding substance. With its floral pattern, it resembles the cloth used for lightweight garments worn in summer. Like other extant *farmāns* sent from the Mughal emperors to the rulers

of Amber, the *nastaʿlīq* text is framed with decorative borders; in this case, it is surrounded by crocuses, painted individually with soft strokes of purple that seem to curl in toward the text. The letter also bears narrow fold marks and the reverse of a seal. Imperial messages were folded in intricate, specific ways to ensure both the authenticity of the message and the privacy of its contents. The document as an embellished object is a testament to the value placed on communications.

The text of the *farmān* itself conjures in vivid detail the passage of objects and people, animals and things. The document first acknowledges a previous message brought to the emperor by the raja via the servant Banwari Das. That servant has been sent back with a "mark of recognition." A second servant, Bhagwan Das, is said to be returning to the raja with a golden shield, robes, and items from Bengal. The document opens up a temporal gap: the message of the *farmān* seems to imply uncertainty as to whether the servant with an oral message or with the gifts has already arrived. The imperial postal system was restricted for use by the Mughal imperial court, which explains why messages carried by Jai Singh's two servants may have arrived after the *farmān*, dispatched by imperial *dāk-chaukī*. In this time gap, both textiles and letters appear far from inert as they travel along the same pathways as cheetahs, elephants, and gem traders, as well as the many other living beings and precious things of early modern gift-giving.

FIG. 2.4 Edict from the Emperor Shah Jahan to Mirza Raja Jai Singh. Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on cotton cloth, ca. 1655. 23 7/32 in. (59 cm) × 9 7/16 in. (24 cm). San Diego Museum of Art, Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, 1990.363.

The Weaving of Figural Textiles A textile's particular characteristics, its texture, color, weight, and warmth, lent dimension to the messages that it carried. In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, a particular style of Safavid figural cloth gained popularity at the Mughal court. Princes and noblemen conscripted these clothes to convey complex messages about political and personal relationships. Given the sophistication of the textile, and the style of dress worn by the figures depicted, we know that the Bikaner garment was made from one of these imported lengths of Safavid cloth.

Starting in the middle of the sixteenth century, weavers for the Safavid court had begun to craft textiles with intricate figural designs using a drawloom. When Shah ʿAbbas I established a monopoly over the silk industry, these figural silks became important diplomatic gifts.[58] As Gülru Necipoğlu has argued, the Ottoman court's ornamental vocabulary of large-scale flowers and vegetation distinguished it from the figural Safavid style, suggesting that divergent fabric patterns reflected differentiations of political agendas.[59] For this reason, the Mughal use of figural textiles in political interactions indicates an

FIG. 2.5 Silk Velvet Designed by "Ghiyath." Signed by Ghiyath, attributed to Iran. Silk, cut and voided velvet with continuous floats of flat metal thread, ca. 1550–1600. 25¾ in. (65.4 cm) × 13¼ in. (33.7 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1952 (52.20.13).

alignment with Safavid aesthetics in the early part of the seventeenth century that would give way to an individuation of the Mughal floral style by the 1630s.

The cloth of the robe given to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner was of supremely high value, since imported silk textiles from the Safavid Empire were among the most expensive fabrics in Mughal India.[60] While domestic production would overtake imports by the time of Shah Jahan, Akbar and Jahangir were eager recipients of silk textiles from the Safavid production centers.[61] The *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* describes textiles that were "bought, or woven to order, or received as tribute or presents."[62] Abu'l Fazl credits Akbar's reign with bringing in enough fine-quality silk textiles to lower the prices and make them more common. Abu'l Fazl writes, "The prices became generally lower. Thus a piece woven by the famous Ghiyath-i Naqshband may now be obtained for fifty mohurs, whilst it had formerly been sold for twice that sum; and most other articles have got cheaper at the rate of thirty to ten, or even forty to ten."[63] The mention of the Safavid master weaver Ghiyath al-Din ʿAli-yi Naqshband demonstrates how well-informed Emperor Akbar was not only about domestic textile markets but also about the production in the Safavid realm. Ghiyath, who lived from around 1530 to the 1590s, was both a poet and a designer and producer of textiles in the city of Yazd, a site famous for its velvet fabrics, like the sumptuous cloth signed "Ghiyath" in figure 2.5. He was the head of the weaver's guild and likely also a chief designer for Shah ʿAbbas's own *kārkhāna* (workshop).[64]

His full name, Ghiyath al-Din ʿAli-yi Naqshband, also refers to the precise work that a creator of complex Safavid textiles undertook. A "*naqshband*" referred to the individual who did the important work of designing and creating the *naqsheh* or *naqsh*, the means of programming a complex loom. The Persian drawloom and its Chinese counterpart, which were used to produce the most sophisticated silk cloths, allowed weavers to integrate different weave structures, including a base ground weave with a figurative woven pattern.[65] The most important and time-consuming work of producing complex figurative patterns lay in setting up the loom. The weaver first created a hand-drawn diagram of each pattern unit involved in the textile and then translated these diagrams into the small-scale physical mock-up (*naqsheh* or *naqsh*).[66] Each thread of this mock-up was then looped in a precise order to all of the warp threads (the threads held taut on the loom) that needed to be raised for a single pass of the weft thread (the moving threads running perpendicular to the warp). The *naqsh* mock-up bundled the warp threads together in a specific order so that the weaver's helper, who was perched on top of the loom, could lift one thread of the *naqsh* in order for all of the correct warps to be raised. The weaver then inserted the correct colors of the weft and used the

pedals of the loom to keep the correct structure.[67] Even a relatively simple pattern might require hundreds of different bundles of warp threads that had to be raised in a specific order. To create the loops of warp threads that yield velvet textiles, moreover, the warp threads of the drawloom also needed to be weighted at different tensions, creating even more complexity but making possible the soft, raised pile of velvet, like that seen on the contemporary drawloom-woven cloth in figure 2.6.[68]

In order to take advantage of the efficiency of the drawloom without sacrificing the liveliness of the pattern, weavers repeated the same pattern in different orientations across the fabric, which would allow for the more efficient use of the *naqsh* in setting up the loom. In the case of Safavid silk textiles, the weaver would often flip a pattern to create its mirror image or stagger the pattern to give a sense of variation.[69] The dispersal of the pattern units with their figural designs grew across the length of a fabric into pairings with narrative meanings. For the wildly popular "prisoner's silk," the weaver created chains of mirrored imagery to evoke distinctive soldiers, horses, and prisoners moving throughout the woods (fig. 2.7).[70] On the Bikaner textile, the weaver off-set two primary units of the pattern along a vertical axis.[71] This arrangement gives the sense of the diagonal pairing of one compartment with a female figure and inscription and a second compartment with a male figure and a different inscription (fig. 2.8).

The separation of the figures into compartments creates a sense of longing. On the Bikaner textile, the weaver has rendered the male figure with rounded, clear lines. All of the elements of the figure point upward toward his love. His turban, wrapped tightly around his head, is tilted to the window above and the lighter-colored band that secures it echoes the diagonal lines of the young man's coat that cross at his chest. His smoothly drawn face and lack of facial hair suggest his youth. The weaver has placed a stem of flowers before his eyes, as though to imply that his window is sweetly perfumed by the thought of love. We see both of his big eyes and arching eyebrows, his plump cheeks, his full lips, and a line marking the bulb of his chin. He is a soft, "moon-faced" young man and he holds another sprig of flowers in his hopeful hand.

His female companion overtakes him in animation. Her face is drawn with raised eyebrows, tapering eyes, a sloping nose, and curved lips. What appears to be her hair radiates outward from her head in flame-like curls. It seems to be sprouting and growing before our eyes. The weaver's portrayal of the female figure's hair is idiosyncratic. Like women portrayed in sixteenth-century Safavid painting, she wears a string of pearls that frames her face. Yet in the most famous painted portrayals of women from this

FIG. 2.6 Drawloom-woven velvet in three colors of pile warp. Shamin Ansari, Varanasi, India. Silk and silver thread, 2012. Rahul Jain's silk-weaving workshop (ASHA).

period, the string of pearls is holding in place a small cap with a veil, or appears from beneath a white wimple that has been tucked in at the chin.[72] The rounded form of the woman's hair does resemble the shape of the Mongol crown, which women are depicted as wearing in Safavid painting, but the woman's head does not have the lobed metal frontal piece seen in renderings of the crown. Furthermore, when female figures are shown in Safavid painting with their hair partially covered or uncovered, their hair is straight and black as it frames their head and is sometimes gathered in a braid down their back.[73] Thus while the young woman's accessories and clothing conform to mid-sixteenth-century women's fashion, her uncovered, short hair (or possibly textured cap) seems to be a departure. The French Capuchin monk and missionary Raphaël du Mans, traveling in seventeenth-century Safavid Iran, remarked that Zoroastrian women did not veil their hair or faces but went in public "with their heads surrounded by a thousand colored nips of such form and shape that only a painting or the eye could recognize and express it."[74] The textile, it seems, may be depicting this phenomenon. Whatever the identity suggested, the artist has achieved a startling tactility by rendering the texture of the figure's curling hair.

FIG. 2.7 Panel, Safavid courtiers leading Georgian captives. Attributed to Iran. Silk, lampas weave, metal-wrapped thread, mid-sixteenth century. 47½ in. (120.7 cm) × 26½ in. (67.3 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest. 52.20.12.

FIG. 2.8 Hand drawing of the textile pattern of the robe given to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner. Drawing: Katy Rosenthal, 2021.

The textile's construction gives the fabric not only a superficial, two-dimensional sense of dynamism but also a three-dimensional depth (fig. 2.9). The fabric has a weft-patterned, complex weave, meaning that the weave structure incorporates at least two sets of warps (binding warps and inner warps) as well as pattern and ground wefts to produce the foundation weave and the figurative pattern.[75] The weave structure adds texture to the cloth as the pattern wefts are carried over on top of the ground wefts. Complex woven textiles from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries tend to become less lustrous over time as the silk threads lose some of their vitality. As can be seen in the contemporary example in figure 2.10, however, textiles woven on the drawloom would have had polished, light-reflective, and slightly contoured surfaces created by the weaving process and, in this example, the metal threads.

FIG. 2.9 Robe given to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner (detail). Cloth: Iran, silk, complex weave, sixteenth century. Garment: Mughal Empire, late sixteenth century. In the collection of Ganga Government Museum, Bikaner, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan, India. 311 B.M.

FIG. 2.10 Drawloom-woven length of brocaded samite. Jamaluddin Ansari, Varanasi, India. Silk, silver and gold threads, 2003. 89 in. (226 cm) × 36 in. (91.44 cm). Rahul Jain's silk-weaving workshop (ASHA). Collection of Lekha and Ranjan Poddar, New Delhi.

Animate Cloth in Inscriptions and Paintings

Beyond their materiality and figural imagery, Safavid textiles also sometimes incorporated inscriptions. A few of the textiles even contained inscriptions that referenced the medium and figural patterns of the cloth on which they traveled.[76] For example, a crimson compound cloth from the late sixteenth century bears textual cartouches that are interspersed with imagery from the story of the lovers Khusrau and Shirin: "The splendor of your figure [comes] from beauty / It has given life to this outer cloak // There has never been a garment of such beauty. / One might say it has been woven from the threads of your soul" (fig. 2.11).[77] On the Bikaner garment, the inscriptions similarly brought the images on the cloths to life. The two separate rectangles of inscriptional text come together into a couplet: "It is as if life is blown (from head-to-foot) into this image / It has become the gatekeeper of Khusrau of Iran."[78] The first part of the inscription suggests an animacy to the robe by stating that "life" inhabits the images on the cloth. Moreover, the word used for image (*sūrat*) is a term for both a portrait and an actual face.[79] Life has been imparted to the male and female images on the robe, making them into living faces.

The woven inscription could also be interpreted as a reference to the gift of the garment itself. The inscription includes the word *sarāpā* after *sūrat*. In this context, *sarāpā* is used to mean "entirely" or "completely"—emphasizing the idea that the image or face (*sūrat*) has completely come to life. *Sarāpā*, with its literal meaning of "head (*sar*) to foot (*pā*)," was also the Persian word that the Mughal rulers used for their robes of honor.[80] The inscription thus includes both the word for a robe of honor and a suggestion that the image has come fully to life.

The idea that life flowed through these textiles was also given form in Mughal paintings as a way to mediate the tension between absence and presence, visibility and invisibility, and the living and the dead.[81] Representations of figural textiles in

paintings provide some evidence for how a garment made of figural fabric, like the one given to Rai Singh of Bikaner, may have contributed to, or interrupted, the dynamics of Mughal social and political life. Figural textiles do not appear in every Mughal painting. For instance, only seven of the forty-four illustrated folios that comprise Shah Jahan's illustrated *Pādshāhnāma* (1630–57) contain images of figural silk. Yet within an album of illustrated paintings like the *Pādshāhnāma*, textiles with human or animal patterns emerge as a recurrent trope. They do not retreat as ornament but engage in a continuous relay, carrying meaning in and out and across the scenes of imperial festivities. Figural cloths can be compared to the figural borders of album pages, such as those from the Late Shah Jahan Album, that created a "multi-layered narrative," extending from the central portrait out into the border frame.[82] In a painting of Emperor Akbar, for instance, the flying figures in the borders hold aloft the dynastic symbols of Humayun's crown and an orb for the emperor, while one attendant holds a musket gun and two others carry falcons in their hands like the emperor (fig. 2.12). Both fabrics and borders added another layer to the painting—whether it be a riddle, a literary reference, or commentary on the figure who wore the cloth—that expressed what was unspoken or only subtly suggested in the painting.[83]

A figural textile marked a site of layered significance. As scholars of Safavid art have argued, textiles with scenes from the classical Persian love stories of Layla and Majnun and Khusrau and Shirin were overlaid with Sufi messages of devotion to the divine; those who wore them could express their piety and depth of feeling.[84] Sheila Canby has suggested that the Safavid painter Riza-i ʿAbbasi of Isfahan and other artists in his circle

FIG. 2.11 Silk textile with scenes from Nizami's *Khusrau and Shirin*. Iran. Silk, double cloth, metal-wrapped threads, silver, ca. sixteenth century. 12 5/16 in. (31.27 cm) × 6 1/4 in. (15.88 cm). The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., 3.280. Acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1947.

FIG. 2.12 Equestrian portrait of Akbar. Mughal Empire. From the Late Shah Jahan Album. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, painting: ca. 1650; borders: ca. 1655. 15 5/16 in. (38.9 cm) × 10 5/8 in. (27.1 cm). Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, CBL In 07B.21.

juxtaposed imagery of woven or embroidered figures with animate, living people to destabilize the distinction between illusion and reality (fig. 2.13).[85] Woven textiles with single, non-repeated figures, like those seen in Riza-i ʿAbbasi's paintings, were rare in early seventeenth-century Iran and may have been an invention of the artist. The appearance of these cloths in paintings adds a layer of mysticism to the works. At one level, a daydreaming lady in a sensuous pose could be a real figure, contemplating her earthly lover depicted on the bolster pillow behind her. At another level, her dynamic with the figure in the fabric could be a more mystical metaphor for the loving relationship that seventeenth-century Sufi mystics proposed having with the divine. In these paintings, the figural silk bolster, along with the mirror and the wine cup, permitted a portrait to move between the earthly and the heavenly.[86]

In an early seventeenth-century portrait of a prince who resembles Jahangir, the figures on the prince's garment compete with the painted forms of the actual man and falcon (fig. 2.14). The textile amplifies, and in some ways animates, the more static content of the portrait. A twelfth-century Arabic couplet read: "The lion in your carpet, in whose body there is no life, / Hunts, thanks to your majesty, the Leo of the sky."[87] And indeed the figures depicted on the silk robe hunt; they leap across the prince's coat as though brought to life by the regal man who wears them. Their movement contrasts with the central image of the prince and falcon, who face each other in a moment of poise and stillness. Although its wings are outstretched, the falcon rests on one claw, and the prince has the bird's feet affixed with a tasseled string. The geese and cranes on the textile, by contrast, are much more free: they have been woven in midflight, their wings

FIG. 2.13 Lady with a Mirror. Riza-i ʿAbbasi. Iran. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 1618 or 1627. Page: 12¼ in. (31.1 cm) × 8 in. (20.3 cm). Painting: 9½ in. (24.1 cm) × 4¾ in. (12.1 cm). Detroit Institute of Art, Gift of Mrs. Edsel B. Ford. 44.274.

FIG. 2.14 Prince with a Falcon. Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1600–1605. 5⅝ in. (14.29 cm) × 3⅜ in. (8.57 cm). Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Museum Associates Purchase, M.83.1.4.

FIG. 2.15A Hunting coat. Mughal Empire. Silk, satin weave, embroidered with silk thread, ca. 1620–25. Length: 39⅜ in. (100 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IS.18–1947.

outstretched, their necks turned to look behind them. The barbed tail of a phoenix curves fluidly along the prince's arm. At the prince's waist and thigh, horned *nīlgāī* spring through the air, and a lion devours a deer. The painter has rendered the scenes on the cloth with three-dimensionality. The hillocks over which the animals jump are shaded to create a sense of volume, while the jade green color that forms the background to the actual prince's portrait remains flat. Since both images—the coat and the prince—appear within the same space of the polychrome painted medium, the scenes on the coat and the image of the portrait's subject exist in lively competition. Instead of seeing a prince engaged in the hunt, the viewer is shown fabric scenes from an imagined or ideal hunt, perhaps one that the prince remembers or hopes to have. The textile serves not as a cover for the prince's vitality but as a vigorous representation of it.

From a seventeenth-century embroidered Mughal garment, we have a sense of how clothing with this kind of intricate design might have appeared when worn (fig. 2.15a). The sleeveless robe, formed of a tight bodice and flared skirt, is decorated with large-size flowers such as irises and poppies, with flying cranes, their wings outstretched, with

bounding deer, lounging lions, and cheetahs catching their prey. As in the painting, the scene on the robe gestures at a landscape with recessional depth. The lions recline in front of a flowering bush; behind the deer, a miraculously naturalistic waterfall overflows with shining shards of blue. Below, thin swirls of blue-green provide a pool of water in which ducks paddle (fig. 2.15b). The embroiderer has used the directionality of stitches to lend volume to the animals. Different shades of brown silk thread give an antelope its soft, furry underbelly and its hooved legs, while the oval shape formed by concentric circles of stitches creates a sense of the animal's taut body. Just as in the Bikaner robe, the surface of the cloth also contains a three-dimensionality not captured in the painting. The embroidery has led to contours on the creamy silk ground-cloth, causing it to pucker and bulge like the fictitious ground beneath the figures.

FIG. 2.15B Detail.

Painted depictions of cloth with figural patterns can present an alternative reading of the narrative unity of the Mughal imperial portrait. In a portrait of Jahangir completed around 1620, three layers of fabric seem to drape over the bottom of the emperor's *jharokhā* window. On the middle cloth, which is partially obscured by the thicker, striped fabric, the painter has rendered the bodies of twelve turbaned men and veiled women (fig. 2.16). The men stand and grab a flowered stalk, their gestures mimicking the emperor's arms, which hold a jeweled crown. The women in Persianate dress wearing long veils kneel on the ground before a white mat arrayed with drinking glasses and a wine flask. In the middle of the cloth, the striped fabric truncates the bodies of the figures and the viewer sees only the bottom of the standing figures' robes and the torso-less legs of the kneeling women. At the top of the cloth, where the fabric folds over the window, we simply see a pair of orphaned brown boots and small, pink knees. The two categories of figures in this painting—the solitary emperor and the patterned people on the cloth—have no interaction. If anything, they are at odds with each other. The top half of the painting contains a portrait of the reigning emperor. His body occupies a three-dimensional space, suggested by his arm, poised just outside the window. By contrast, in the bottom half, the artist has painted figures that are flat and part of a repeated pattern. At the same time, however, they carry on pleasurable activities of drinking and socializing that the emperor also enjoyed.

A painting of Jahangir holding a portrait of his deceased father, Akbar, contains a subtler figural textile below the opened window that may also allude to the Mughal dynastic past (fig. 2.17). The cloth is wine-colored and bears a central green, gold, and orange ogive that is familiar from both knotted-pile carpets and woven silks. On either side, birds sit in thin gold branches, their beaks upstretched as though they are singing. Two full, facing figures and two partially shown figures sit along the bottom of the textile. Unlike the

FIG. 2.16 Jahangir holding a crown (detail). Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1620. 12 13/16 in. (32.5 cm) × 7 in. (18 cm). The British Museum, London, Transferred from the British Library, 1974,0617,0.21.3.

FIG. 2.17 Portrait of Emperor Jahangir holding a portrait of his father, Akbar. Abu'l Hasan and Hashim, Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1614. Painting: 4¾ in. (12 cm) × 3¼ in. (8.3 cm). Musée du Louvre, Paris, OA3676b.

textile in the other portrait of Jahangir, the figures here do not wear Safavid courtly dress but resemble horsemen or soldiers perhaps from Central Asia. This is suggested by their brightly colored, loose short-sleeved tunics layered on top of long-sleeved garments, their headgear with a hanging sash in the back, and their tall, equestrian boots.[88] Each seems to hold a wine bottle or flask at his waist. The figures align the textile with the military figures and equestrian traditions of Central Asia, a geographic and stylistic reference that evokes Akbar and Jahangir's predecessors, the emperors Babur and the great Timur. During his reign, Jahangir developed an interest in dynastic portraiture and patronized many paintings that foregrounded the Mughal rulers' Timurid genealogy.[89] The color and pattern of Jahangir's garments suggest a thick silk with a spiraling gold arabesque that more closely resembles designs on Timurid and Ottoman textiles.[90] A deep blue binding fabric with six-pointed stars provides a contrasting edging for the sleeves and neckline of the garment. Jahangir also wears a doubled necklace of pearls, emeralds, and rubies. The Mughal rulers passed down their gems and collected precious inscribed spinel rubies that they believed had been in the possession of their Timurid forebears.[91] Using decorative objects and inset portraits to reach across space and time, the painting fictively unites the living emperor with his deceased father and figures from the Mughal dynasty's Central Asian past.

Figural textiles could also carry the mind to places outside or beyond the rendered scene (fig. 2.18). In Bichitr's ca. 1615–20 painting, a group of religious leaders and courtiers, dressed in brown, gray, and orange, surround an unidentified prince in a green *jāma*, the color of which vibrates against the red of the bolster pillow behind him. The scene, unusually for Bichitr, is set outside, in a garden with a complex, arched pavilion in the background. The painting is full of movement. The figures' bodies rotate toward and away from the picture plane, and a standing, orange-clad servant seems caught mid-motion as he fans the prince from above. On the right-hand margin, Bichitr has painted a courtier with a deep maroon turban who looks out at the viewer. His *jāma* has an unusual, dark-green pointed collar, but it is his white robe layered on top that separates him from the crowd. Flaming orange birds fly across the cloth, their heads and wings sharply angled toward the man's neck. The weightlessness of the birds recalls the imagery of the prince with a falcon. In his position half in and half outside the painting, the courtier seems to be lifted out of the scene by his cloak.

FIG. 2.18 Garden gathering with a prince. Bichitr, Mughal Empire. From the Minto Album. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1615–20. 11 in. (27.94 cm) × 7⅞ in. (20 cm). Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Purchased from Lord Minto, 1925. CBL In 07A.7a.

FIG. 2.19 Persian Courtier. Mughal Empire or Deccan. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1615. 6⅜ in. (16.2 cm) × 3⅜ in. (8.6 cm). San Diego Museum of Art, Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, 1990.457.

A painting that has been attributed to either the Mughal or Deccan courts makes a literary reference using figural textiles. The painting portrays a sweet-faced young Persian man whose red baton (*taj*) in his turban associates him with the Safavid court. Beneath a fur-lined pink silk cloak, he wears an emerald green jacket made of figural silk as well as tapering trousers with a repeating pattern that depicts the tale of Khusrau and Shirin, one of the great Persian love stories (fig. 2.19). The young man also seems to be holding a painting of Christ's stages of the cross. His contemplation of a Christian scene is, in some ways, a less surprising feature. With the introduction into the Mughal Empire of the illustrated Polyglot Bible by Jesuit missionaries in the late sixteenth century, it became fashionable, even within imperial manuscript and mural painting, to include Christian imagery.[92] The scene on the man's green jacket conforms to other courtly tropes—it depicts the chase with pouncing lions and darting deer, as well as a Persian courtier waiting on a seated nobleman who holds a musical instrument. On the fabric of the man's trousers, however, the scenes become more specific. Adorning the portrait subject's legs is a rendering of a beautiful woman with streaming hair. The scene depicts Shirin, the princess from Armenia who has been glimpsed for the first time by her beloved, the Sasanian king Khusrau. Composed in verse by the Persian poet Nizami, and circulated throughout the Persian-speaking world,

من مسکین غلام عشقم ای عقل از سر من بگذر
که آن سلطان ترا در کار خود محرم نمی بیند

this story of the star-crossed historical lovers Khusrau and Shirin would have provoked in the portrait's viewers a poetic recognition. In this scene, Shirin has hung her clothing on a branch while she bathes. Her black horse, Shabdiz, the swiftest steed in all the lands, stands riderless nearby. Unbeknownst to Shirin, Khusrau, who had only heard descriptions of her beauty, has come upon her bathing in a cool pond. In the rendering, Khusrau holds his finger to his lips in wonder. Extant examples of a silk velvet textile bear a very similar pattern to the man's trousers (fig. 2.20). With its plush surface, the three-dimensional textile heightens the sensuousness of Shirin's bathing figure and her glossy black hair.

While the man in the portrait is a dandy in his bright, fur-lined cloak and his sumptuous silks, the story of his clothing, and of the painting that he holds, communicates a much more complex message: the naked purity of Shirin, whose hair is her only cloak, sits in contrast to the luxuriously overdressed young man. The frame of the painting contains cartouches with romantic verses by the Indo-Persian poet Amir Khusrau.[93] Together with the frame, the figural textiles expose the young man as a lover whose longing for the beloved is so strong that it has permeated his rich garments.[94]

FIG. 2.20 Velvet fragment with scene from Nizami's *Khusrau and Shirin*. Attributed to Iran. Silk, cut velvet, sixteenth century. 15⅜ in. (39 cm) × 6½ in. (16.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, The Seley Foundation Inc., Schimmel Foundation Inc., Ruth Blumka and Charles D. Kelekian Gifts, and Rogers Fund, 1978 (1978.60).

These figural textiles gave the painter recourse to a second order of significance, invoking mysticism or romance in an otherwise silent portrait. In 1630, Bichitr, now working under Shah Jahan, revealed a ghastly truth through a painted figural cloth in a scene depicting Shah Jahan's accession ceremonies (fig. 2.21a). This painting became part of the illustrated *Pādshāhnāma* that documented Shah Jahan's reign. It rendered an event that had occurred just two years earlier in 1628. Ebba Koch sees this painting, with its rigid symmetry, single vanishing point, and "unparalleled harmony," as potentially the site where "the schema [of Shah Jahan–era painting] was laid down for other painters to follow."[95] It is a work of precision, order, and balance. Yet in the middle of the painting, just inside the golden railing that demarcated the highest political appointees, stands the figure of Reza Bahadur, wearing a robe made of figural silk woven on a gold background. He is the only person in the crowd dressed in gold, and when the painting was first made, the gold leaf of his garment must have made it shine more brightly than any other painted textile (fig. 2.21b).

To a contemporary viewer, however, the portrait of Reza Bahadur would stand out because of his sinister role in Shah Jahan's ascension to power. Reza Bahadur, known as Khidmat Parast Khan, was a trusted attendant in Shah Jahan's employ but was also his court assassin, responsible for the beheading and strangling deaths of five of Shah Jahan's relatives in Lahore in one day—one half brother, two cousins, and two nephews—in

FIG. 2.21A Shah Jahan receives his three eldest sons and Asaf Khan during his accession ceremonies. Bichitr, Mughal Empire. From the *Pādshāhnāma*. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1630–67. Page: 23 in. (58.6 cm) × 14½ in. (36.8 cm). Image: 12 1/16 in. (30.6 cm) × 8⅜ in. (21.3 cm). Royal Library at Windsor Castle. Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 1005025.k fol. 50b.

FIG. 2.21B Detail.

order to clear the way for Shah Jahan to ascend to the throne after Jahangir.[96] The accession ceremonies took place almost immediately after Reza Bahadur returned to Agra with the news that he had killed all of the men. One of Shah Jahan's biographers, in his *Zafarnāma-i Shāhjahān*, hinted at the uncomfortable knowledge that all those present must have held of Reza Bahadur's acts: "And when Khidmat Parast Khan brought to Lahore the warrant for their execution / How that statesman executed the warrant—I know that you know. Why say what he did?"[97] On a purely documentary level, the figural Persian silk that Reza Bahadur wears may have been a costly gift given to this high-ranking official in recognition of a critical intervention. From an artistic perspective, the detail of the robe, painted by an artist with an interest in absence and presence and in the interaction between real and fictional figures in a painting, is an uncanny, even chilling reminder of all the other bodies that Reza Bahadur destroyed in Agra. The flattened, neutralized figures adorn his robe like a necklace of skulls.

Thus the leaping lions on the carpet hunt, embroidered birds fly, and the slain competitors haunt the scene, all through the power of the prince and his figural clothes. Textiles stood as more than a marker of wealth or imperial favor. The Bikaner robe was no exception. The garment had been sent from a distance to Raja Rai Singh, a Rajput ruler who was nonetheless conversant in Persian literary texts and familiar with the riddles, puns, and paintings of courtly society. With its imagery of two figures installed in *jharokhā*-like windows, the textile resonated with Mughal imagery of the period that meditated upon longing and separation. The figural silken fabric may have evoked for Rai Singh the lingering presence of the sovereign who bestowed the robe.

The Binding Ties of the Bikaner Robe By the time that Raja Rai Singh received his robe of honor, he was already a figure of some ambivalence at the Mughal court. Rai Singh (r. 1571–1612) had risen to prominence as a victorious general and reliable nobleman within Akbar's military in the 1570s. He was responsible for numerous campaigns against the independent rulers of Gujarat and helped to quell rebellions in Marwar. In 1586, Rai Singh's daughter married Prince Salim, the future Emperor Jahangir. But in 1587, after a victorious military campaign, Rai Singh was said to have gone missing and was presumed dead by his entire family and the imperial court. He returned after two years, seemingly having gone to wander with a yogi.[98] After this, the *Akbarnāma* and Mughal documents suggest that Rai Singh remained away from the emperor in his home territory of Bikaner for prolonged periods of time rather than paying his respects at the imperial court.[99] An imperial letter from the court of Akbar, dated to 1595, questions why Rai Singh had not yet arrived in the Deccan for a military campaign. The letter reads: "It seems very strange and wonderful. What has become of his sincerity, ambition for work, devotion and friendship? What has happened to him? Is there something wrong with him, or excess of drinking has incapacitated him? Has any disease afflicted him that carried away all his vigour and strength for work?"[100]

If Rai Singh in fact received the robe from Jahangir in 1597, it came at a low moment in his relationship to the imperial court of Akbar. Akbar's father-in-law had accused Rai

Singh's men of beating him during a stay at the Bikaner court after he made advances on a young girl.[101] Akbar, taking his father-in-law's side, deprived Rai Singh of a land gift. In the years that remained of Akbar's reign, Rai Singh fell in and out of favor; on one visit to court, Rai Singh was denied an audience with Akbar; at another point, Rai Singh again failed to travel to the Deccan and Prince Salim sent him a strongly worded letter.[102] When Salim ascended to the throne as Emperor Jahangir, he learned that Raja Rai Singh had consulted a Jain holy man about the future and this mendicant, whom Jahangir called "black-tongued" and a "heretic," told Rai Singh that Jahangir's reign would last at most two years, at which point Rai Singh left his post.[103] After he became emperor, Jahangir forgave the aged Rai Singh and promoted him in rank.[104]

Two portraits of Raja Rai Singh, one from his lifetime and one likely painted after his death, depict a solidly built figure who gained in girth as he aged (figs. 2.22 and 2.23). Both portraits display an attention to the ruler's garments that seems to suggest specificity about the figure's clothing choices, an insight that also justifies our careful scrutiny of the figural silk garment that Rai Singh received from Prince Salim. The works seem to be linked portraits, with both depicting Raja Rai Singh leaning on his staff. The earlier work, dated to either ca. 1590 or ca. 1610, represents an unfinished sketch of the ruler.[105] The sketch is one of a corpus of hundreds of preparatory drawings and tracing-paper models done by a family of artists who worked for the rulers of Bikaner.[106] The artist who

FIG. 2.22 Portrait of Maharaja Rai Singh of Bikaner. Nur Muhammad, Mughal Empire. Ink and gum tempera on paper, ca. 1590 or 1610. Paper: 16 11/16 in. (42.4 cm) × 10¼ in. (26 cm). Image: 8 1/16 in. (20.5 cm) × 5¾ in. (14.6 cm). The Cleveland Museum of Art, Gift of Flora D. Glass and Elwood G. Glass, Jr., 1987.1100.

FIG. 2.23 Portrait of Maharaja Rai Singh of Bikaner (also known as Rai Rai Singh). Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor and gold and silver on paper, ca. 1610–30. Image: 5¼ in. (13.4 cm) × 2¾ in. (7 cm). Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 1005038.ao.

produced this sketch, Nur Muhammad, went on to produce many paintings and portraits for the Bikaner court. In the portrait, Raja Rai Singh looks aloft. The downward sweep of his mustache corresponds to the curved lapel of his *jāma*, which is tied under the left arm like the Bikaner robe. Nur Muhammad has left the colors blank, but instructions were added, likely later in the eighteenth century, for another copy of the portrait to be made. Certain instructions are straightforward: the *jāma*, with its four-pointed hem, should be *safed*, or white, in keeping with the style for white, cotton muslin *jāma*s worn at court. The ca. 1610–30 portrait too depicts the raja in his white cotton *jāma* but without the four-pointed *chākdār* hem at the bottom, perhaps suggesting the passing from fashion of this particular style. The paintings give special attention to the figure's trousers and his shoes. The pajama trousers in the earlier work are specified to be *sūthan kirmachī būtī sone kī* (a gold pattern of leaves or flowers on crimson); in the later portrait, the figure of Rai Singh wears bright orange trousers.[107] Orange is a color used often in the portrait—the turban (*pagṛiyā*) is described as "embroidered over orange." The sash is also meant to be orange. The slippers that the figure wears have been attributed to Jahangir's influence (they are known as *salīmshāhī*, or "Shah Salim," slippers), but even at the earlier date, the artist has taken pains to begin to paint a floral pattern on the figure's right foot.[108] In the later portrait, the figure's upturned slippers feature golden embroidery on a maroon base fabric.

The painting of Rai Singh in his dress as a Mughal nobleman serves as a reminder of the kinds of social relationships forged between members of the Mughal elite, a group that included Rai Singh, who was both a ruler in his principality of Bikaner and a Mughal

FIG. 2.24 Robe given to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner (detail). Cloth: Iran, silk, complex weave, sixteenth century. Garment: Mughal Empire, late sixteenth century. In the collection of Ganga Government Museum, Bikaner, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan, India. 311 B.M.

mansabdār, and thus a member of the military and administrative system. Molly Aitken has argued that Nur Muhammad (the artist responsible for the earlier portrait) and other artists in his family produced paintings not only for the Bikaner ruler but also for the court of ʿAbd al-Rahim Khān-i-Khānān (1556–1626), an important military general and one of the highest-ranking officials at the Mughal court. ʿAbd al-Rahim was Turkic in ancestry and Muslim, but this did not prevent him from patronizing the production of paintings with subject matter drawn from the Hindu epics and *rāgamālā*s. He was also an accomplished poet in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Hindi.[109] More generally, the overlapping patronage of Nur Muhammad by Rai Singh and ʿAbd al-Rahim is indicative of a broader point about sociability between these figures within the Mughal Empire, both of whom served long terms of military duty in the Deccan. In fact, the 1597 letter to Rai Singh instructs that he should join ʿAbd al-Rahim on a military campaign in the Deccan. As Aitken contends, their shared patronage of painting "encourage[s] us to think about personal relationships among high-ranking Mughal officials—Muslim and Rajput—in our analyses of what we call sub-imperial painting. *Mansabdārī* friendships were probably a significant factor in the constitution of art in this period."[110] Paintings were enjoyed at *mehfil*s (gatherings) where the Mughal elite listened to music, dancers performed, and members of ʿAbd al-Rahim's circle recited poetry.[111] At these gatherings, rigid rules structuring courtly life were relaxed, but in a controlled way. As Katherine Butler Schofield writes, "The mehfil was thus a space in which the cherished themes of Indo-Persian high culture—love and the grief of separation from the beloved—could safely be performed in an aesthetic rather than a political space, thus diffusing their threat."[112] The fact that garments like the Bikaner robe were worn at these multisensory, embodied gatherings heightens their relevance to historical study and the personal relationships they fostered. As Mirza Nathan's account showed, gifts and shared material pleasures strengthened bonds of friendship throughout the Mughal sphere. The figural representations on the textile evoked the themes of pain and separation from love poetry, and the ties of affection and friendship, humor and skepticism, that enlivened Mughal letter-writing and social life.

When figural silks were sewn into robes of honor, and also into trousers, bolster pillows, saddle blankets, covers for quivers, standards, and swords, they became three-dimensional objects. During this tailoring process, the modular patterns of human figures on the fabric had to be fit together to maximize the efficient use of the cloth and to maintain a steady pattern for the eye. The pattern of the Bikaner textile is compartmentalized into easily discernable boxes, making the formation of a three-dimensional garment even more complex. This became most challenging for the tailor in the front section and in the triangular skirt of the robe. In the front, one panel crosses over the other to meet on the wearer's left side of the chest. The front panel dips downward from the neck to the chest in a sloping curve (fig. 2.24). When the tailor cut the fabric along this curve, he had to cut off the heads, fingers, and floral ornaments of each successive compartment of the pattern. He seems to have kept in mind the dance between visibility and invisibility, however. At the precise point where the front panel crosses over the left

side of the chest, the image of the young man peeps out from behind the textile border. The tailor has placed the man directly over the wearer's heart, similar to how lovers in Persianate Sufi romances are described as wearing the image of their beloved upon their breast (fig. 2.25).[113] This interplay between the seen and unseen in the cloth also reflected a tension between what was visible on the surface of Mughal rhetoric, politesse, and political obligation and what was sensed in the unsaid.

The form of the garment that Rai Singh received had a symbolism of its own that corresponds to a more complex interpretation of the gift at a time when tensions in the relationship between Bikaner and the imperial court persisted. The Bikaner robe is constructed in the form of a *jāma*: the North Indian garment with a high waist, a flared skirt, and, on the upper body, one panel that crosses over the other to fit closely around the chest.[114] On the Bikaner robe, this outer panel of the garment is tied beneath the left arm. In Mughal society, the fact that the front panel of the garment was tied on the left side identified the wearer as Hindu. Muslims wore their *jāma*s crossed on the right side of the body. On a related form of male garment, known as an *angarkhā*, the panel of fabric on the chest was known as the *parda*, a Persian word that means curtain or veil.

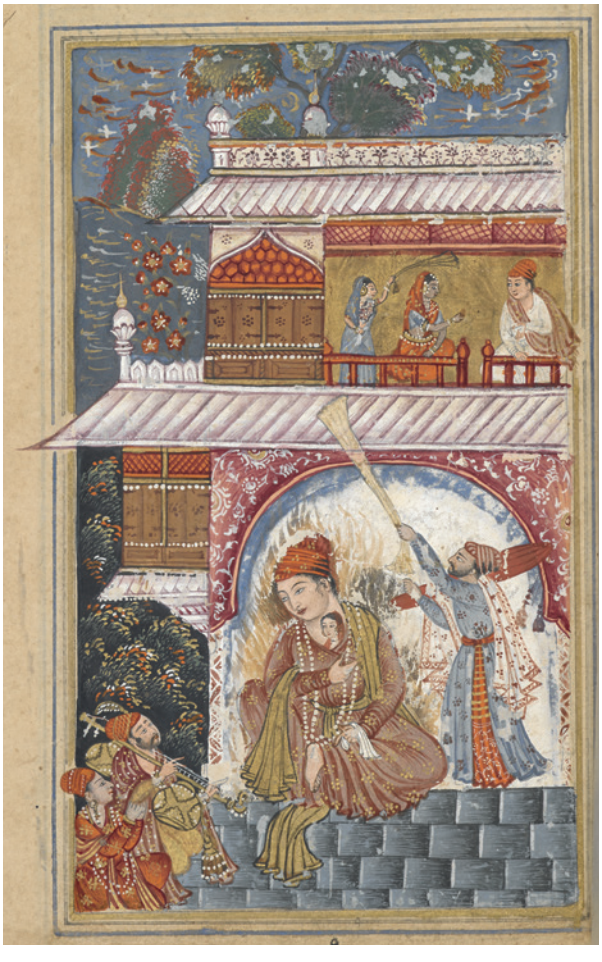


FIG. 2.25 The hero, Shah Ji, is enflamed with passion. Deccan, probably Bijapur. From the *Pen-Nem*. Opaque watercolor on paper, ca. 1610. 9⅝ in. (24.4 cm) × 6⅜ in. (16 cm). The British Library, London, BL Add.16680, f. 87r.

This part of the garment was tied on either the right or left side, similar to the *jāma*. The term given to the part of an *angarkhā* that tied at the left, in the Hindu fashion, was the *ultā parda*: *ultā*, used as an adjective, simply means "left." However, similar to the Latin word "sinister," which also means "left," when used with *parda*, *ultā parda* also could carry the connotation of "reverse, perverse; contrary, opposite; stupid; wrong."[115] Worn tied on the right, as prescribed for Muslims in India, the lower flap is called the *sīdhā parda*. *Sīdhā* means "erect, upright; accurate, correct, right, proper."[116] Although the Bikaner robe is distinctive from the *angarkhā* form, the way that the *parda* of these garments crossed the chest may have carried meaning for Rai Singh and the manner in which he wore the robe. The garment that Prince Salim gave to Rai Singh brought with it this suspicion, whether playful or serious. Over the raja's heart was the subverted and deranged *ultā parda*, the perverse curtain of the soul.

The word *parda* also appears in the second line of the inscription of the Bikaner robe: "It is as if life is blown (from head-to-foot) into this image / It has become the gatekeeper (*pardadār*) of Khusrau of Iran." The second line of the inscription declares the image to be the "gatekeeper" of Khusrau of Iran, an honorific that had become, by Safavid times, a general name for the king of Iran. Again, the inscription references the materiality of cloth, for the word "gatekeeper," *pardadār*, literally means "holder of the curtain." In the context of the rituals of the historical Sasanian king Khusrau II, the keeper of the curtain held a cloth or screen that separated the king from the eyes of petitioners.[117] More generally, the word *pardadār* had come to mean the king's confidantes. It was not merely an archaism but also a word in use in Islamicate courts in the seventeenth century to refer to the inner circle of the court. In a later letter from Jahangir to the Bikaner rulers dated to January 1613, it is written that a rebellion in Bikaner has "been brought to the notice of the curtain-keepers of the threshold of grandeur and glory [the emperor]."[118] The holders of the curtain were Jahangir's most trusted advisors.

The word *pardadār*, with a long letter "alif," as it is woven onto the garment, properly means "holder of the curtain." Yet *pardadar* with a short vowel is a betrayal: it means he who tears the curtain of trust and reveals secrets. It is a term of violence. In Persian poetry, the words *pardadār* and *pardadar* were often used together to draw out the opposing meanings of the two near-homonyms—one who guards the curtain, and one who tears it. In the romance of *Layla and Majnun*, Nizami used imagery of the *parda* repeatedly to describe Layla's seclusion that still does not keep safe the secret of her love for Majnun:

> Layla was behind the veil of the litter,
> She was tearing the veils (*pardadarī*), [yet] keeping the secret (*pardadār*)
> She had bid farewell to the veil (*parda*) of good and bad name.[119]

Nizami here has used the closeness of the sounds to emphasize the thinness and vulnerability of the curtain and the shifting nature of secrecy, reputation, and love. While the inscription on the robe only allows for the reading of loyalty, the regular poetic

associations of these two words may have brought the idea of betrayal into the room along with this robe.

Which was Raja Rai Singh, Jahangir's father-in-law and the recipient of the Bikaner robe? Was he a secret keeper, the curtain holder, the chamberlain—or the render of the veil, the one who destroyed the emperor's trust? The garment communicated what Jahangir could not say: that in Mughal alliances, a curtain keeper and a curtain destroyer could be one and the same. Just as Emperor Akbar had faulted Daʿud for tearing off the appearance of allegiance, Jahangir could accept the unknowability of an ally. The crucial skill was to remain alert to the diaphanous distinction between friend and foe, between order and chaos. Although Raja Rai Singh had earned the suspicions of the imperial court for his absences, the steady stream of gifts that are mentioned in Jahangir's letters to Rai Singh also suggest how textiles, and the letters that accompanied them, worked to mediate this distance, serving as a continual physical reminder of the intimacy of social relationships that were forged in courtly settings. The garment preserves in animation the tension of alliances that were maintained across the realm and within strict protocols of politeness, a tension that textiles helped to ease, even when they contained questions and a skeptic's puns (fig. 2.26). For a raja who refused to come into the emperor's presence or aid against his military foes, the textile would forbid its recipient from pretending that the imperial court did not exist. And for Rai Singh, who came to believe that Jahangir's reign would meet an untimely end, the textile gifts, recently warm from the emperor's shoulders, reinforced the message that the monarch was very much alive.

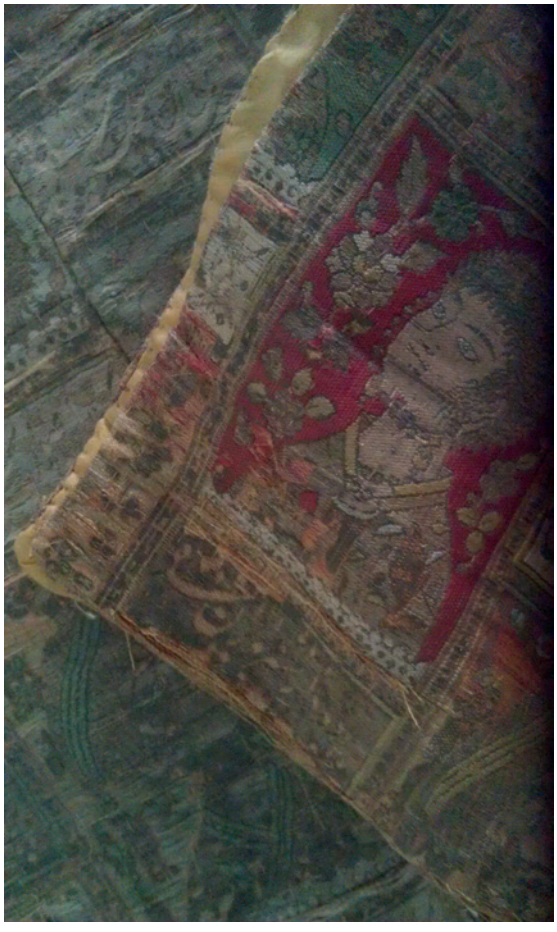


FIG. 2.26 Robe given to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner. Cloth: Iran, silk, complex weave, sixteenth century. Garment: Mughal Empire, late sixteenth century. In the collection of Ganga Government Museum, Bikaner, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan, India. 311 B.M.

Breathing Life into the Cloth

In early modern Hindustan, textiles traversed two poles of meaning, from the sympathy expressed in a father's turban given to his grief-stricken son to the layered questioning of a robe of honor. The Bikaner robe provides a rare confluence of visual, inscriptional, and textual evidence that allows unusual insight into the complicated economy of cloth. Jahangir's relation to Rai Singh suggests the potential of pieces of cloth to act, emote, and test subordinates on behalf of an absent king.

The textiles circulating in the Mughal realm shared many features with other, more widely studied works of art in the early modern period, namely the small-scale paintings made for the Mughal court that were incorporated into imperial albums. Although the Bikaner robe's fabric contains a repeating pattern as opposed to individual, unique paintings, each of the miniature portraits on the cloth is enclosed in a small box, similar to the

framing devices used in manuscript paintings made for the young Prince Salim before he became Emperor Jahangir. As with many Mughal manuscript pages, the delimited area of the figural scene has also been juxtaposed on the fabric with a cartouche of text. The small inscriptions embellished upon the meaning of figural portraits in arcane ways.[120] Even the name given to the Persianate album format—the *muraqqaʿ*, which means "patched garment"—made metaphorical reference to a shared textile origin.[121] The *muraqqaʿ* albums of the Mughal court, and particularly those of Emperor Jahangir, were remarkable for their variety, for their cosmopolitan inclusion of copies of European prints and Timurid calligraphy, and for their capacity to reveal the compiler's individual taste through surprising juxtapositions, clever accompanying couplets, or visual records of sentimental times.[122]

The actual robes, the "personal," "warm," "soft," or "private" robes of the emperor and his noblemen, also contained riddles, as when a robe with images of longing contained potential secondary meanings about perversion and disloyalty. Garments arrived with notes about their intended purpose to see an *amīr* through winter or to bring a son out of mourning. Clothing was invested with the memory of sentimental moments.

Textiles differed from the albums of paintings in that they were not intended primarily for the delight of the eyes. It was not that they lacked visual stimulation; it was that they also brought subjects into contact with sensory pleasures in the quick glint of metal-wrapped threads, the slight catch of the fingers on silken fibers, or the hushed muffle of a carpet's thick pile. Experienced amid wafting music, scented air, sweet fruits, and the burnished, gold-rimmed pages of a *muraqqaʿ* album—the sounds, smells, tastes, and sights of Mughal courtly life—the textiles contributed a lush sense of touch. Oleg Grabar identifies the unique sensory appeal of textiles in *The Mediation of Ornament*. In his discussion of silken carpets, including those with fantastical figural forms, Grabar writes that a textile object has a "sensory power of its physical components" that can overwhelm even the visual qualities of its patterns. There is a "physical excitement of . . . fabric" that "breathes life into its constituent parts."[123] Moreover, in experiencing these objects "the viewer-user penetrates into the object, both literally, as rugs are meant to be walked on [and, one could add, clothes are meant to be worn], and perceptually, as the eye meanders its way through its designs. [The viewer] becomes part of its structure and begins to play with its forms."[124] Those encountering a textile were rarely simply looking. They were "penetrating" the object by plunging their hands through the sleeves, but they were also submitting to a garment by allowing it to ripple over their backs. The imagery of longing depicted in paintings and the language of absence and presence that permeated letters and poetry of the period found physical correlates in fabric garments. In their dual ability to overwhelm and protect, to envelop and shield, textiles created conversation and forged communities across the territories of a vast realm.

Chapter 3

THE MOVING WALLS OF THE AMBER COURT

Sometime around 1630, an artist from the Mughal atelier painted the Rajput rulers Maharaja Jai Singh of Amber (r. 1621–67) and Maharaja Gaj Singh of Marwar (r. 1619–38) seated together.[1] Despite their golden throne and the ropes of pearls around their necks, the two maharajas are nearly upstaged by a textile (fig. 3.1a). While this painting introduces many unknowns—the Devanāgarī inscriptions identifying the two rulers do not indicate the occasion that led to this portrait or the location where it was painted—the most uncanny aspect of the work occurs in the mirroring of Jai Singh and Gaj Singh in the small canopy held aloft above them.[2] The painter Bichitr has rendered a silk textile with a pattern of men perched in the same position as the two rajas below: each on his knees, angled slightly to face one another, while one man holds out his hand with an offering (fig. 3.1b).

FIG. 3.1A Maharaja Jai Singh of Amber and Maharaja Gaj Singh of Marwar. Attributed to Bichitr, Mughal Empire. Folio from the Amber Album. Opaque watercolor, ink, gold, and gesso on paper, ca. 1630. Page: 17¾ (45.09 cm) × 13½ in. (34.29 cm). Image: 9⅞ in. (25.08 cm) × 7¼ in. (18.42 cm). Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Museum Associates Purchase, M.80.6.6.

FIG. 3.1B Detail.

The fact that a cloth could unsettle the rigidities of a painting in the high Mughal imperial style suggests fabric's great consequence at the seventeenth-century courts of Hindustan, an importance we struggle to understand today. In the portrait of Jai Singh and Gaj Singh, for instance, art historical research into the history of Mughal art has allowed us to identify the style of the painting, with its pastel hues, polished naturalism, and emphasis on detail, as aligned with the court workshop of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (r. 1628–58).[3] From the perspective of painting, this work can be understood as evidence of the Rajput Jai Singh and Gaj Singh's embrace of the aesthetic culture of the Mughal imperial center. Although Gaj Singh was about fifteen years older than Jai Singh at the time, both rulers held equally high rankings at the Mughal court, a fact indicated by their shared title of "Maharaja" in the painting's inscriptions.[4] At the same time, the artist's iconographic choice to render a textile aloft above the two men provides a subtle move away from the rhetoric of imperial portraiture, which typically focused on a single subject. In representations of Shah Jahan, for instance, the ruler is positioned beneath a

fringed umbrella, or *chatrī*, a long-standing marker of kingship (fig. 3.2). In this painting, by contrast, Jai Singh and Gaj Singh are presented as equals, sharing the flat, tooled golden throne, although Jai Singh takes the role of host by offering Gaj Singh *pān*.[5]

The textile seems to offer two functions. First, it marks a space for the rajas at the center of the painting that is otherwise left vague by the lack of any architectural surroundings. It is a provisional space, as the cloth floats aloft. As we will see in the case of the Amber court, textiles often made space and conjured scenery that was temporary or soon to be moved. Second, the swath of figural silk cloth was likely imported from Safavid Iran like the figural robe given to Rai Singh of Bikaner. In the case of the Bikaner robe, the figural silk textile was sent out from the Mughal center to evoke absent bodies and emit expressions of feeling. The previous chapter showed that textile consumption and the gifting of luxuries politically tied regional Rajput courts to the imperial center. By contrast, the cloth in this painting would also have stood independently as a confirmation of the figures' elite status and of the two maharajas' participation in the luxury textile trade with the Safavid Empire. As such, it linked the rulers materially and visually to courtly cultures beyond the bounds of Hindustan, bypassing the imperial center.

This chapter focuses on one of these rulers, Jai Singh of Amber, to explore how this well-connected, highly mobile Mughal nobleman who was a king in his home territories deployed the art of cloth in the northwestern region now known as Rajasthan. I argue that textiles—cotton, wool, and silk—came to express both the interregional mobility of a figure like Jai Singh and the cosmopolitanism of the Amber principality in the mid-seventeenth century.[6] Through carpets, the Amber rulers evoked the gardens of Kashmir; through painted cotton wall hangings, they incorporated the lively urban scenes of the mercantile, independent sultanate of Golconda. Foreign imagery on cloth could be layered on top of or beside the more local textures and paintings of the Amber Palace to communicate the worldly aesthetic of the ruler. Seen in this light, Gaj Singh and Jai Singh were using the painting with its textile not only to conform to Mughal practices but also to claim their rightful place and their social ease within the protocols of a much more extensive courtly network.

The examination of Amber represents a turn away from the top-down patronage and consumption of textiles at the imperial court, and yet the collections at Amber are vital to understanding the cloth of the mid-seventeenth-century Mughal

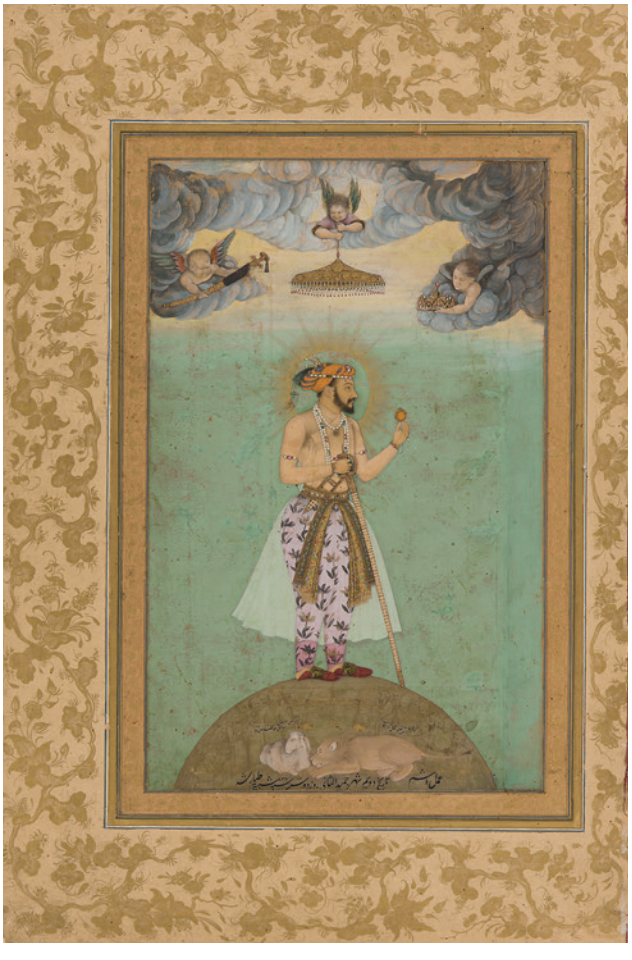


FIG. 3.2 The Emperor Shah Jahan Standing on a Globe. Hashim, Mughal Empire. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1618–19. 9⅞ in. (25.1 cm) × 6¼ in. (15.8 cm). Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1939.49a.

FIG. 3.3 Brass rings on the walls of the Amber Palace, Amber, Rajasthan.

Empire. In part, this is because the Amber textile collection is the only corpus of South Asian textiles from this period with a secure provenance.[7] Moreover, the huge scale of the Amber collection of textiles overturns certain assumptions about the usefulness of "Mughal" as a designator of time or period of production. Rahul Jain has recently argued that the quantity of textiles from Amber, and the fact that almost all surviving early modern South Asian courtly textiles bear a likely Amber provenance, provokes "significant, and unsettling, questions about the patronage, manufacture, ownership and use of courtly textiles."[8] In particular, Jain argues that the Amber collection should prompt us to question the assumption "that the supremacy of the Mughal emperors must reflect an overwhelmingly superior patronage of the arts and, thereby, also the ownership of the finest surviving Indian artefacts of the period." The Kachhwaha dynasty of Amber collected textiles in ways that conform to "neither the prevailing political hierarchy nor the 'imperial' and 'sub-imperial' divisions drawn by art historians."[9] Jain suggests the possibility that the Amber textiles may have rivaled or even exceeded those of the imperial court in scale and quality, making it essential to study the Amber collections in any account of South Asian cloth. His words are also a reminder that an art historical focus exclusively on the imperial center risks overlooking the wealth of materials that existed in the regional, though hardly provincial, courts of seventeenth-century Hindustan.

This chapter expands outward from the intimacy of garments described in the first two chapters to focus on large-scale textiles that were hung from walls, spread out on marble floors, and hoisted as tents that rivaled permanent architecture in size. While the palaces, temples, and public spaces built into the craggy landscape of Amber now present to us blank plaster, sandstone, and marble walls, they were once covered in layers of cloth. This is the case with much of Mughal architecture and is true of early modern built environments more generally. Mughal architectural structures were always composite entities made up of what Chanchal Dadlani calls "expansive, multisensorial complexes."[10] Monumental tent structures brought an even more flexible materiality. Stone or brass rings, inserted into the architecture, recur throughout Mughal and Rajput spaces and once held the pulleys and ropes necessary to suspend heavy hangings and anchor colossal tents (fig. 3.3). They are an enduring testament to the existence of textiles. They also indicate that although textiles transformed space, their presence was transitory and introduced fluidity into the built environment that could unsettle the rigidities of more stable forms of architecture.

Textiles were unfurled and then rolled up again at a rapid tempo that corresponded to the progression of a military camp and the rhythms of daily meals, seasons, and festivals, of nighttime moods and midday sun. Past studies

have emphasized how garments allowed regional rulers to align themselves across boundaries with distant elites.[11] Garments publicly expressed identities, but large textile furnishings operated differently than clothing worn on the body. As the first two chapters showed, gifts of textiles as garments typically reinforced the political order. By contrast, furnishing textiles had the capacity to transform spaces into liminal sites in ways that masked or even dissolved strict distinctions and instead recalled distant places. If gifted cloth for the body could establish a rank and order, cloth that was used to create space could unsettle those hierarchies.

This is also why the textile medium is a particularly apt way to understand the position of Rajput rulers like Jai Singh and his son and successor, Ram Singh (r. 1667–88), within the broader Mughal Empire. If one of the central features of the empire was its vast breadth—its expansive sense of space that contained variations in ecology and artisanal practices, alongside multiple faiths and competing loyalties—it also required an immense, peripatetic apparatus of mobile ministers and military generals to maintain.[12] The Mughal emperors themselves spent almost 40 percent of their reigning years moving throughout their realm in military camps. Their tours regularly lasted well over a year at a time.[13] This was also a central condition for Mughal bureaucratic and military officers: regional rulers from across the empire, like the Kachhwaha rajas of Amber, were rarely allowed to reside for long within their own hereditary territories. Instead, they were given governorships in sites far from their homelands, which came with lucrative access to taxation.[14] Even if they were not required to move to the site of governance, regional rulers were expected to support the emperor's military campaigns and were required to reside for at least part of the year at the imperial court in Agra.[15] That Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner, recipient of the ambivalent silken robe, had managed to absent himself from the imperial capital for years at a time represented a grave breach in protocol and threatened his relationship to the emperor.

Traveling as part of the imperial military entourage, the Amber rulers also traversed the geography of the empire and came to collect its diverse textile creations, a fact that contributed to the cosmopolitan image that the Amber court cultivated about itself. In the poetry produced for Amber and other Rajput courts, textiles are cast as the gift brought from afar by a returning lover, the tangible results of travel. As objects that could literally be layered on top of one another, or hung in juxtaposition side by side, textiles also provided a flexible, material means by which the Rajput kings mixed regional styles to proclaim their cultural pluralism. For this reason, the soft furnishings of the Amber rulers, which could be dismissed as ephemeral decoration, occupied an equally important role in the expression of a courtly identity as the permanent architecture of the Amber Palace and Fort.

This chapter gathers together economic, poetic, and material evidence to recover how textiles moved and were used in Rajput domains. After providing historical context for the Amber court, I begin by introducing archival documents from the royal storehouses of Amber that suggest the household of the Amber Palace actively collected textiles from afar. The prices listed in the Amber inventories indicate a number of important facts about early modern textiles. First, textiles as objects were more valuable

in monetary terms than contemporaneous paintings made for the Amber court, a reversal of modern systems of value. A textile's price also correlated to its place of manufacture: the further a textile's point of origin, the more costly it became. Textiles, and particularly textiles from distant sites, were thus treasured and important items at the Amber court. From this economic evidence, I turn to popular poetry from seventeenth-century Rajasthan that took textiles as its subject matter and used puns and metaphors to bring to life the textiles' extensive travels.

Together, the first half of the chapter establishes the grounds for reading social and political meaning into the textile collections at Amber. The second half of the chapter examines actual textiles that have an Amber provenance and proposes ways to reimagine these objects in the spaces of the Amber Palace. I analyze a group of small-scale cotton cloths, collected in Amber between 1650 and 1690, that depict in their figural vignettes forms of courtly comportment found across South Asia and the Persianate world. These small cloths achieve in miniature what the vast textile collections at Amber sought to do: they depict the diversity of courtly spaces inhabited by the Amber rulers and the worldliness of the inventories that they came to inhabit. The final part of the chapter postulates which spaces of the Amber Palace these small cotton textiles and many other, much larger objects may have occupied. By reimagining the walls and floors of the Amber Palace covered in cloth and carpets, I suggest how textiles can disrupt the enduring structures of architecture. I conclude with a look toward textile collecting of the eighteenth century, when emphasis shifted from imports to supporting manufacturing at home. The increased confidence in local textile motifs ran parallel to advancements in the political stature of Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II (r. 1699–1743), who transformed the principality of Amber and the newly founded city of Jaipur into a flourishing textile manufacturing center in its own right.[16]

Through numbers, poetry, and architectural space, this chapter makes the overarching argument that textiles opened up possibilities for early modern rulers who lacked territorial wealth to express the fragmentary but still bountiful conditions of their kingship. As textiles were hung in the spaces of the Amber Palace, they obscured more permanent markers of identity and place, complicating static divisions between the Mughal center and the Rajputs' regional domains. When lined with layers of textiles, the city, the palaces, and the temples of Amber evaded the enduring realities of social and political life, opening space for imagination, cross-cultural analogies, and mobile identities.

A Regional History of Amber The small principality of Amber is located in the northwestern region of India known today as Rajasthan. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Kachhwahas, the Hindu dynasty that ruled Amber, were foremost among the sovereign Rajput principalities in their close links to the Mughal emperors. These ties were initiated in 1561 by a marriage between Emperor Akbar and Hira Kumari, a Kachhwaha princess and the daughter of the hereditary ruler of Amber, Bharmal Kachhwaha (r. 1547–74). The Kachhwahas of Amber continued to rise in prominence at the Mughal court throughout the seventeenth century, serving as generals and valued noblemen to the emperors Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, and ʿAlamgir.[17]

Mughal sovereigns enriched the hereditary rulers of Rajasthan through governorships and tax revenues but also subordinated them to the policies of the imperial center and reshaped the territorial contours of their lands. The primary landholdings that the central administration recognized were the hereditary territories (*watan-jāgīr*s) of the rulers; in the case of the Kachhwahas of Amber, this extended only to the borders of Amber.[18] Any other lands were given at the discretion of the emperor. As noblemen, or *mansabdār*s, Rajput rulers would be temporarily granted additional lands (*jāgīr*s) as properties on which they could collect revenues.[19] The imperial administrators determined which lands the *mansabdār*s would be allocated; in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the Kachhwaha Raja Man Singh (r. 1589–1614) governed the hereditary patrimony of Amber, but also *jāgīr*s in Punjab and Bengal, which proved more fertile and thus more profitable than the lands of Rajasthan. Mirza Raja Jai Singh (r. 1621–67) enlarged his landholdings around Amber, but many of these districts were only partially awarded, meaning that he shared their administration and revenues with other Mughal imperial *mansabdār*s. Other, competing branches of the Kachhwaha clan also retained control over surrounding territories.[20] The Mughal administration created such disparate territorial blocks intentionally in order to prevent the Rajput rulers from establishing independent control over large, contiguous territories.[21] This system of land allocation led to a period of relative peace but also diminished Rajput autonomy. Far from being rulers over vast domains, the Amber Kachhwaha dynasty held a widespread patchwork of unconnected pieces of land.

Historians of the art, literature, and culture of this period point to the inherent political tension between the imperial center and regional kingdoms as a generator of artistic and literary production, arguing that political negotiation occurred within the cultural sphere.[22] Amber and Bikaner, which had stronger allegiances to the Mughals, adapted Mughal styles in their artistic production or attempted to align courtly mores to conform with the Mughal model.[23] However, even artists at the more resistant Rajput courts, such as Mewar, had access to Mughal idioms and made deliberate decisions about the incorporation of the more illusionistic Mughal painting style.[24] There also existed a shared, "sub-imperial" style that was patronized by a wide array of Mughal functionaries from Rajput kings to Muslim noblemen who rose within the Mughal ranks.[25]

In the case of architectural production, the rulers of Amber incorporated distinctive Mughal architectural features in their constructions at the Amber Palace. The Jai Mandir, likely built in the seventeenth century, contained a *jharokhā*, or public viewing window, like those seen at Shah Jahan's palaces in Agra and Delhi.[26] The second-floor pavilion of this structure had a sloping, *banglā*-style roof that was similar in form to that used by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan at his Agra fort. Shah Jahan maintained an imperial privilege over this architectural form, and over the bulbous baluster columns introduced in his constructions, forbidding others to build with these forms.[27] Catherine Asher takes Amber's exceptional move in breaching these restrictions as a sign of the "Kachhwaha's favored status."[28] Yet Jai Singh's building projects also included a Hall of Public Audience that was built in a vernacular idiom, similar to a temple *mandapa* used for communal gatherings. It is rectangular in form with pillars along the periphery and

elephants decorating its brackets.[29] The contrast between the Jai Mandir and the Hall of Public Audience suggests that the Amber rulers' aesthetic shifted between Mughal and more traditional Rajput forms of architecture.

In the seventeenth century, Mirza Raja Jai Singh also fostered an open cultural atmosphere in Amber through his patronage of literature and learning. He emulated the Mughal rulers by commissioning manuscripts, establishing a library, and patronizing poetry—and yet the content of his patronage differed from the Persian-language culture at the Mughal court. Though he could read Persian, Arabic, Portuguese, and Turki, Jai Singh directed his patronage toward *rīti* literature, which was written in Braj Bhasha, took Sanskrit poetry as its model, and embraced religious themes.[30] Biharilal, a poet under Jai Singh's patronage, composed his renowned *Satsaī* while at the Amber court, a work that remains one of the most enduring pieces of early Hindi literature.[31] By becoming a patron of architecture, poetry, and luxury goods, Jai Singh was not merely imitating the practices of the Mughal emperors but also claiming the prerogatives that these practices represented. Jai Singh's predecessor, Man Singh, had also embraced both sides of his role as a trusted nobleman in Emperor Akbar's court and an independent king in his own land, "carving out a domain of local sovereignty within an imperial system."[32]

Architecture and literature serve as enduring evidence for the multiple political orientations of courtly life. Yet the constant movement of the Amber rulers in their role as military generals challenged the importance of palatial architecture. Under these conditions of what Zirwat Chowdhury has called "mobile sovereignty," the maharajas of Amber became a shifting center, whose elaborate households could exist within the permanent structures of their historical palaces but could also be constructed entirely of textiles as part of the elaborate tent encampments of the emperor.[33] The materials of cotton, silk, and wool expressed other, more fluid courtly identities and speak to the importance of alternative values, such as transportability, connectedness, and abundance. In this period, the geography that the Amber rulers conquered during their military campaigns as part of the Mughal army provided a more robust rationale for their stature than the small, hereditary kingdom that they claimed as their own. Ramya Sreenivasan notes that in the poetry praising Raja Man Singh, the poet Narottamdas emphasized not the extent of Man Singh's homeland but the many regions he vanquished as a Mughal general, which constituted "the real basis of the Amber Kachhwahas' prominence in the late sixteenth century: Mughal military campaigns rather than internal territorial expansion and consolidation brought stature, grants, Mughal aristocratic rank, and fame for Man Singh."[34] It seems possible that this same logic applied to the diverse range of textiles found at the Amber court—not just Mughal-derived but Kashmiri, Bengali, and Deccani cloth—which reflected the rulers' recent victories in these regions that extended far beyond his hereditary lands.

In times of peace, moreover, the diversity of a ruler's more ephemeral material culture—his food tastes, his musical entertainments, and even his textile objects—projected a sense of the sovereign's wealth but also networks of connection. The boast of exotic imports was as much a means of signaling the ruler's procuring power as it was a statement of the efficiency and safety of the region's travel routes that allowed for such

extensive overland trade.[35] Rajeev Kinra has pointed out that even the fruits at the emperor Shah Jahan's breakfast table, the "melons from Balkh and Kariz," the "plums from Kashghar and Ghur," and the "Samarqandi pears and apples," in addition to "watermelons from Kashmir" and Gujarati and Deccani mangoes, served as edible symbols of the diversity of Shah Jahan's dominions.[36] The breakfast delicacies showcased the emperor's "pluralism and generosity."[37] These fruits paralleled the diversity of visitors to the emperor's court, from "Turks, Tajiks, Kurds, Lurs, Tatars, Africans, [and] Circassians" to visitors from "Transoxiana, the Qipchaq steppes, Turkistan, Georgia, [and] Kurdistan."[38] Echoing the linkages between fruits and cloth also found in the *varnaka* lists and the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, Shah Jahan's textile collection was another manifestation of this diversity; it included Kashani velvet and European satin, in addition to more local Gujarati silk textiles and painted cottons from the Deccan.[39]

Poetry written for Raja Man Singh in the late sixteenth century similarly lauded his collecting of delicacies, manufactured goods, and exotic flora and fauna. The poet Amrit Rai conjured a worldly mixture of trees that grew in the gardens and groves outside of Amber in his poem of praise for Man Singh. Allison Busch notes the thumping rhythm of the consonants that begin the tree names, such as "Pipal, palash, palarak (sheesham) and pilu trees."[40] There were also: "Beautiful pomelos, nice betel nut palms, apples, and peaches flourishing / *Jāmun*, lemons, citrons, figs, and masses of yellow apricots / Jackfruit, karaundā, coconut palms, a great stand of *bel* trees, and groves of monkey jack."[41] Amrit Rai's poetry falls within the genre of *nagaravarnana*, literally a "description of a city," and is related to the *varnaka* literature analyzed in the first chapter. Busch writes that the purpose of this poetry is not documentary but rather "to create a poetic evocation of the marketplace, with all its colorful sights and smells . . . [and] to make an argument about plenitude and prosperity and, by extension, the successful Kachhwaha kings who rule over such a bounteous domain."[42] While, as Nicolas Roth notes, the list of the trees was fictitious and "aspirational," given the diversity of each tree's temperature needs—apples and apricots would have had difficulty growing in the hot climate of Rajasthan—it positioned Amber as a place of abundance.[43]

Amrit Rai also tabulated the visitors who came to the Amber court: "Eminent King Man, Sayyids, Mughals, and Afghans, Khatris, Kayasths, and Brahmans cluster at your doorstep."[44] Textiles from afar completed the proof of a "bounteous domain," and the poets at Man Singh's court recounted a variety of carpets, taffetas, silks, and gold-embroidered fabrics that were sold in the bazaars of late sixteenth-century Amber, suggesting that fine textiles existed not only in the sheltered spaces of the palace but also in the open markets. Amrit Rai described seeing "velvet" (*makhmal*), the "specialness" (*khāsa*) of which he could not articulate.[45] Narottamdas expressed wonder and mystification at the sight of silk and wool carpets with pom-poms hanging on their corners in Amber.[46]

Evidence for a Worldly Textile Trade Trade records from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries suggest that Rajput courts had a taste for luxury goods that rivaled that of the imperial center and were, in the seventeenth century, importing more than

FIG. 3.4 Summer carpet or floor spread (detail of inventory inscriptions). Coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, before 1690. 85 in. (215.9 cm) × 41 in. (104.1 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, Bequest of Mrs. Harry Markoe, 1943, 1943-51-126.

they were able to export. Rajput courts like Amber participated in a long history of trade across the western Thar desert that predated the Mughal Empire and independently linked them to Gujarat, Punjab, and Sindh.[47] From what is now Pakistan, traders imported horses that had been shipped across the Indian Ocean as well as dried fruit, tobacco, perfumes, and paints. From just south in Gujarat, merchants imported silk, black pepper, ivory, musk, coconuts, pearls, dyes, camphor, and paper.[48] From Kashmir, they purchased pashmina shawls and from Bengal, silk textiles and fine cotton muslins. From the Deccan, they imported elephants but also, as discussed later, the painted cotton textiles of Machilipatnam.[49]

At the Amber court, only partial material evidence of the flourishing trade remains. While the pepper, musk, tobacco, and dried fruit that Rajput rulers imported have gone the way of ephemera—daubed on, smoked, and eaten—traces of the textiles have been preserved at Amber for many years. Until the mid-twentieth century, the court of Amber-Jaipur held India's most extensive collection of knotted-pile carpets from Iran and India.[50] When the collection was inventoried in the early twentieth century, there were approximately three hundred fine wool and silk carpets, although many of these have since been sold to museum collections in Europe and the United States.[51] In addition to the carpets, early research by Chandramani Singh on the textile storage of the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum revealed Amber's vast collection of textile hangings and garments.[52] A decade later, Ellen Smart showed that Persian and Devanāgarī inscriptions written in black ink directly onto the backs of a large number of dispersed seventeenth-century textiles matched the inscriptions on textiles remaining in Jaipur, suggesting their origins in the Amber collections (fig. 3.4).[53] While a few of the inscriptions bear the seal of the Amber treasury, many have only a date of accession or a series of numbers noting the size, value, and function of the object. Rahul Jain has since identified, translated, and published numerous additional inscriptions on many of the seventeenth-century textiles held in museum collections throughout Asia, Europe, and the United States, indicating that these cloths, previously categorized as "Mughal," were originally in the possession of the Amber court.[54]

Contextual details strengthen the Amber provenance for these textiles. Many of the textiles now in European and American museums were purchased from Imre Schwaiger, a prominent dealer and collector of Indian art who spent many years in Delhi running the Cartier jewelry store. In 1918, Stewart Culin, a curator and ethnologist from the Brooklyn Museum who purchased the hangings that opened the introduction, described visiting a warehouse in Jaipur where he found that "everywhere around me were spoils of some old palace," including arms and

armor, thrones, and many "cotton curtains." He suggested that these textiles came from Amber, which he described as "an abandoned palace and citadel which was deserted in the middle of the seventeenth century and left with all its contents, all its furnishings to moulder undisturbed."[55] Beyond these more speculative accounts, the sheer volume of carpets definitively known to have come from Amber-Jaipur and the attributions of the inscriptions suggest that the Kachhwahas were singular collectors of seventeenth-century textiles whose tastes have almost exclusively determined what we know to be seventeenth-century South Asian or "Mughal" textiles.

The Amber Textile Inventories The inventory records from the Amber Palace workshops and storage facilities (*kārkhānas*) further corroborate the story of the Amber-Jaipur collections and the volume of the court's collecting.[56] From the seventeenth century onward, accountants at Amber documented the valuations and expenditures for storehouses in the account records, or *jamākharch*, and kept track of the progress of textile production in the *roznāmcha bahi*, or "daily work registers" for the workshops.[57] The notations were made on pieces of paper measuring three inches by five inches (fig. 3.5). These inventory records are now held in the Rajasthan State Archives in Bikaner. The records for the textile collections are spread across the *rangkhāna* (the dyeing workshop), the *chāpkhāna* (the printing workshop), the *siwankhāna* (the embroidery workshop), the *vastrgriha* or the *kapad-dwara* (the clothing storage), and the *toshākhāna* (also sometimes spelled *toshakhāna* or *toshkhāna*, meaning the wardrobe or the luxury storage). While the contents of the storage sites may have overlapped, Chandramani Singh proposes that the *toshākhāna* "probably had to deal with the upkeep of the daily wear clothes of the Maharaja and his family, and the *kapad-dwara* was the store for more expensive costumes and jewelry."[58] In this way, the *toshākhāna* sheds light on the volume of textiles purchased on behalf of the large royal household including the ruler's mother, wives, children, and servants.

FIG. 3.5 *Toshākhāna* Records, Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner.

The earliest records available for the various textile departments are from the inventory of the *toshākhāna* and date to VS 1755–56 (roughly 1699 CE).[59] The account records (*jamākharch*) of the *toshākhāna* made in 1699, though late in the century, can be taken as more representative of seventeenth-century collecting practices in Amber than of the eighteenth-century trends that emerged under the transformative rule of Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, who came to the throne in 1699 at the age of eleven. The 1699 records reflect the practices of documentation that predated Sawai Jai Singh II's reign. The dates on the records themselves are given in the Islamic calendar's Hijri date system, while the inventories during Sawai Jai Singh II's reign came to use the Indic Vikram Samvat dating. Although Sawai Jai Singh II would go on to expand textile manufacturing and rethink the

protocols of textile gifting in Amber-Jaipur in the early decades of the eighteenth century, these changes occurred in the subsequent decades as Jai Singh relocated the court from Amber to his newly planned nearby city of Jaipur in the 1720s.[60]

The most prevalent descriptors in the 1699 *toshākhāna* cloth inventory have to do with basic qualities of the cloth: textiles are described as *sādā*, meaning plain; *rangīn*, meaning colorful or dyed; *chīntna* (a word related to the European "chintz"), meaning spotted or patterned; *pashm*, from the Persian for "woolen" (as in *pashmīna*); *khāsa*, meaning royal or special; *mashrū*, referring to a cloth of mixed silk and cotton; and *wāfta*, which could mean something "woven" (from the Persian *bāfta*).[61] Some records mention embellishment and needlework, including *chikandozī*, related to the name *chikankārī*, that now refers to delicate white-work embroidery on a white cotton ground.[62]

A single page from the *toshākhāna* inventory records captures not only the different qualities of textiles held in the royal collection but also the geographic diversity of their origins (Table 1). While this page includes more place-names than most other pages of the year's account records, it lists textile types and derivations of place that recur throughout the inventories. The cloths are enumerated by the number of *thān*—a word that is recorded as meaning either a single piece or a certain length of cloth. A nineteenth-century account of the wool market in Kashmir states that a *thān* meant a measurement of twenty-four *gaz* (a *gaz* is a length that itself has varied meanings and can range from just over two feet to a yard).[63] This meaning, however, seems to have been unlikely at the time of the Amber inventories, as it would have suggested the equivalent of seventeen contemporary yards of cloth.[64] In Mughal inventories and continuing into the nineteenth century, a *thān* usually meant a length of cloth of an unspecified size.[65] In the inventories of Akbar and in the historical accounts of ʿAlamgir, a *thān* of the most precious cloths, such as silk velvet and gold-ground fabric, was equivalent in price to a single *gaz* of cloth in length.[66] Due to the fact that these valuations occurred in the royal storage of the *toshākhāna*, the most likely meaning for a *thān* is thus the frustratingly vague length or piece of cloth, which could potentially range in size from one yard to more.

TABLE 1. Inventory Page from 1699 CE, Jaipur *Toshākhāna Record*

Derivation	Type of Cloth	Number of thān	Range of Values (in rupees)	Approx. Distance from Amber (in miles)
Dhaka or Chanderi	*mahmudī*	9	18–63	1,800 or 260
Sanganer	*chīnt*	3	4–7	15
Malpur	*chīnt*	4	8–14	400
Agra	*chīnt*	2	14	150
Sultānpur	*chīnt*	3	6–11	450
Multan	*chīnt*	15	8–34	500
Machilipatnam	*chīnt*	1	32	1,750

Source: Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner.

The records list nine *thān* of a muslin fabric known as *mahmudī*; six *thān* were *sādā*, or plain, and three were *chāpdār*, or block-printed. As a fine muslin cotton, the *mahmudī* cloth may have come from Dhaka in Bengal, but Chandramani Singh cites evidence of this cloth being called elsewhere "mahmudi of Chanderi" (*mahmudī Chanderi kī*), indicating an origin in Chanderi in present-day Madhya Pradesh.[67] The *thān* ranged in price from a relatively less expensive eighteen rupees to a very costly sixty-three rupees for one piece. To give a relative sense of value, prices for paintings in the *sūratkhāna* (painting storage) inventory from the early eighteenth century were regularly priced at one rupee, five rupees, and twelve to fourteen rupees.[68] Even the plain *mahmudī* was more costly than the most highly valued paintings.

The record then advances to twenty-eight *thān* of *chīnt* cloth, which likely indicated patterned cloth that had been painted or printed.[69] The list of the twenty-eight *thān* of *chīnt* cloth is broken down by geographic derivation. In these inventory records, we learn that the closer the origin of the cloth, the less valuable it is. Among the *chīnt* pieces were three from Sanganer, the still-active textile-producing village that lies about fifteen miles from Amber. The three Sanganeri pieces were valued at seven rupees, six rupees, and four rupees. The *chīnt* pieces from Malpur, a city approximately four hundred miles to the south in Gujarat, were valued at fourteen rupees, eleven rupees, and eight rupees. A *chīnt* from Agra, which lies 150 miles away, cost fourteen rupees. Those from Sultānpur, approximately 450 miles away near Lucknow, were valued at six, eight, and eleven rupees. *Chīnt* from Multan, a town in Punjab that is over five hundred miles from Amber across difficult terrain, ranged in price from *sādā*, or plain *chīnt*, for eight rupees to thirty-four rupees for one that had been printed (*chāpdār*). Finally, there is one *thān* listed of the *chīnt* cloth from Machilipatnam in the Deccan that had traveled over one thousand miles to reach Amber. Valued at thirty-two rupees per *thān* for a *sādā* or plain piece, it was only rivaled in price by the printed cloth from Multan and the extremely fine cotton muslin *mahmudī* cloth (see Table 1).[70]

Variations in price reflect both the cost of transport for these cloths and the fact that the cloth was so fine as to be worth transporting from far away. Multan, for instance, had been famous for its cloth since the twelfth century, including a period during the fourteenth century when Multani merchants held a monopoly over the cloth trade in Delhi.[71] One later entry lists Machilipatnam *chīnt* with the designator *khes*, which means a fine, smooth cloth.[72] As we will see later in this chapter, the painted cotton cloths from Machilipatnam were highly valued at the Amber court and throughout Mughal India for their figural motifs and rich colors but also, it seems, for the smoothness of their texture.

The Poetry of Moving Cloth in Rajasthan Through its monetary valuations, the inventory of the *toshākhāna* provides one way of assessing the importance that cloth held at the Amber court; courtly and popular poetry provides another path into the meaning of this material. When textiles entered Rajput royal households, their faraway sites of production became the inspiration for poets and romantic encounters. For Jai Singh's own court poet Biharilal, imported cloth became a simile in his great work, the *Satsaī*. In one couplet, he likened a young woman's beauty, which holds a mixture of youth and

adolescence, to the silk cloth known as taffeta (*tāftā*).[73] As Rupert Snell notes, the Persian word *tāftā* refers to threads that have been twisted (*tāfta*), but the distinctive features of the cloth actually derive from two different hues in its warp and weft. Taffeta is also known in Hindi as *dhūp-chāh*, meaning sunshine and shade, to capture the way the color swings between light and dark as a taffeta fabric folds.[74]

Poetry from the late seventeenth-century Rajasthani region of Mewar suggests how foreign cloth was assimilated into the lay imaginary. Two poems, translated and analyzed by Chandramani Singh, enumerate the different types of textiles passing through the markets and into the palaces of Rajasthan.[75] The *Kapadā Chīntanī* (Wish-fulfilling Gem of Clothing) and the *Kapadā Kutūhal* (Clothing Curiosities) contextualize fabrics into different snippets of narrative and vivid visual scenes. The poet Madhodas from the village of Pahuna composed the *Kapadā Chīntanī* in VS 1730 (1673 CE). His poem brings into verse form the contents of his local ruler's textile inventories. Madhodas writes in the final stanza of the poem: "In the year 1730 of Vikrama era, [this] treasury of textiles has been narrated with pleasure by the humble one, Madhodas, before his King, who is clad in *jarkas* (shawls)."[76] The scene provides immediacy: Madhodas evokes his local ruler, Karan, swathed in fabric and seated among his textile treasures. While the poem was written for the ruler of the town of Pahuna, which lay over 150 miles from Amber and was much closer to the Rajput courtly center of Udaipur, a manuscript of the poem found its way into the Amber-Jaipur collections.[77] Moreover, since it was written for a much less exalted local ruler, the *Kapadā Chīntanī* represents a more accessible form of poetry than the high courtly works of Biharilal and captures a wider range of seventeenth-century material culture.

The second poem, *Kapadā Kutūhal*, also derives from the area of Udaipur and was composed by a poet named Prayagdas sometime in the seventeenth century. Though it employs fewer puns, this composition is more worldly in its textile descriptions, incorporating Persian textile names and citing cloths that come from further distances. Singh writes that these poems are "not works of high quality but . . . popular compositions."[78] The poetry provides some insight into how those outside the palace walls of the Rajput maharajas may have conceptualized various textile types.

In the *Kapadā Chīntanī* and the *Kapadā Kutūhal*, the verses are romantic, even erotic in theme, and speak of the female love heroine (the *nāyikā*) and her longing for her often absent beloved (the *nāyaka*), a trope familiar from Hindi *bhakti* poetry of the seventeenth century. *Bhakti* poetry of the period was known for expressions of religious feeling, particularly the intense feelings of Krishna devotees, and for themes relating to the love between Krishna and Radha.[79] Yet some of the couplets have a less divine and more earthly tone, describing older lovers beyond their blooming years. In these poems, the authors have taken something luxurious and out of reach—the finest cloth made by artisans, some distant, some local—and literally domesticated it, folding the fabric into intimate vignettes and verses.

The poems gather disparate details to give an overall impression of a textile's seasonal use, visual effects, or varied textures. These poems are further examples of the *varnaka* genre discussed in the first chapter, here taking the form of poetic couplets rather

than unadorned tabulations of textile types. Amrit Rai's poetic descriptions of Amber's flowering trees would be an elite literary example of this genre, but earlier *varnaka* texts from Gujarat and throughout northern India contained lists of descriptions for use in admiring a lady, for types of city dwellers, and for enumerating varieties of horses, elephants, fruits, and flowers.[80] Chandramani Singh writes that through the circulation of *varnaka* texts, "descriptions were standardised. . . . Such texts were also useful for educating laymen, composed in popular language. Couplets were easy to remember and . . . were frequently quoted in conversation."[81] These descriptive compositions were still creative: the literary devices (*alamkār*) in these couplets can take the form of puns (in the case of the word *chīnt*, meaning the cloth and *chīntna*, the verb meaning "to sprinkle" or "to spray") or they can serve more loosely as similes (the lady's eyes were red from crying like the color of the *kasumbha* dye).[82] In some cases, the references contribute to what Ratan Parimoo has called, in the context of Biharilal's poetry, the "image cluster" of a couplet, when the author draws an analogy between a situation and a certain object, for example, the return of the beloved *nāyaka* from far away and the distance traveled by a precious foreign textile.[83] In these poems, the inventory comes alive. The textiles do not lie flat but enter descriptions as surprising new gifts and remembrances of lovers.

Both the *Kapadā Chīntanī* and the *Kapadā Kutūhal* include textiles that surfaced in the Amber *toshākhāna* inventory records. One of the most frequent textiles mentioned in the records is *chīnt* cloth, which also appears in the *Kapadā Chīntanī*.[84] In order to remind readers of *chīnt*'s meaning as a cloth "sprinkled" with design, the poet Madhodas links the cloth to the spring festival of Holi, when lovers and friends toss colored powder or spray colored water at one another (fig. 3.6). The couplet reads: "It was the month of Phalgun, the spring season when her spouse arrived remembering their old love. He playfully sprinkled (*chīntna*) coloured water on me and my companions sang teasing songs."[85] In this couplet, Madhodas communicates subtle but accurate information about the making of certain brightly colored textiles. At the festival of Holi, celebrants did spray each other with colored water made from dyes, such as saffron, safflower, and turmeric, a fact that connected the festival to the manufacture of more durable *chīnt* textiles. The poet has also imbued the cloth with an emotional cadence. Built into the couplet about *chīnt* is the idea of memory, of the spouse being reawakened to his old love and becoming lively like the bright spots of colored dye on the *chīnt* fabric.

In the *Kapadā Kutūhal*, a uniquely Rajput textile gains its meaning from the context of seasons, festivals,

FIG. 3.6 Girls Spraying Each Other at Holi. Bikaner. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1640–50. 7½ in. (19 cm) × 4 15/16 in. (12.5 cm). The Cleveland Museum of Art, Andrew R. and Martha Holden Jennings Fund, 1971.83.

FIG. 3.7 *Lahariyā* turban cloth. Rajasthan. Cotton, tie-dyed, ca. 1840s–1870s. *Cora Ginsburg: Costume, Textiles, Needlework*. New York: Cora Ginsburg Gallery, 2009–2010, p. 22.

and weather. Dyers in Rajasthan are still known today for making textiles with the *lahariyā* pattern, a brightly colored design of overlapping chevrons made using a folded tie-and-dye technique. The name of the pattern, *lahariyā*, derives from the word *lahar*, for "wave."[86] The lines of the pattern undulate, evoking the waves of the cloth's name. *Lahariyā* textiles were often used in turbans, and when the cloth wrapped around the head, the lines of the pattern jostled and shifted, causing the colors to ripple over each other and interrupting any sense of orderliness (fig. 3.7). Moreover, the dyes used to make the most valuable *lahariyā* cloth were intentionally unfixed colorants that would run off the cloth when they got wet in the rain and add further fluidity to the patterns on the fabric.[87] The *Kapadā Kutūhal* locates this fabric in the time of year when it was most often worn, during the rainy monsoon season: "He has carefully tied his *lahariyādār* turban. A lady as lovely as *Shravan Teej* (a festival of rains) is almost clinging to his neck."[88] The lady's body, whose beauty has the feeling of the rain, is wrapped around the neck of her lover. We can imagine the pigmented water dripping off the turban and rippling over the couple's entwined arms.

While the couplets contextualize *chīnt* and *lahariyā* cloths within festivals celebrated in Rajasthan, other couplets evoke a greater geographic breadth in their references to a returning lover bearing gifts from afar. Verse seventeen of the *Kapadā Chīntanī* introduces *dakhani chīr*, the name given to the famous silks of southern India. *Dakhani* means southern (the same word used for the Deccan region) and *chīr*, in this context, seems to mean cloth or sari. The poet writes, "The love-lorn wife tells her friend that her darling has arrived at last, who is her all in all. He took her in his arms and gave a gift of *Dakhani cheer*."[89] We imagine from this couplet that the wife's beloved has returned from far away, perhaps from the Deccan, where he was able to purchase the valuable silk. The cloth's soft texture, silky sheen, and capacity to drape around the body turn the reader's mind to the recipient but also to the arrival of the beloved, the *nāyaka*, with his gleaming skin and his loving embrace.

The *Kapadā Kutūhal* contains multiple examples of imported textiles that also feature in the Gujarati *varnaka* lists and the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*. The poet writes of one woman standing in her palace, wearing satin *atlas*. Another couplet describes a woman whose "lovely limbs" (*sundar angī*) are graced by a sari made of the diaphanous cotton *tansukh*, the fabric whose name means "pleasing to the body."[90] The couplet confers dual pleasures, the first the pleasure of gazing at the woman's body, but the second the feeling that she has of the cloth on her own skin.

Two couplets in the *Kapadā Kutūhal* include textiles from Multan and Machilipatnam. The inventory records in the *toshākhāna* indicated that *chīnt* cloths from Multan and Machilipatnam were among the costliest textiles imported into Rajasthan. The poet writes: "The husband says, listen O, beautiful one, this is a night of very special type and if you will wear your Multani *kanchuki* (blouse); it will give me much pleasure."[91] The poet creates an analogy between the "special night" and the special garment, thus asserting the value of the "Multani *kanchuki*" and imbuing it with sensual power.

In another verse, the gift of an imported blouse earns the lover his lady's attentions: "Pleased with her *kanchuki* (blouse) of the charming *Machhipatan*, just presented (by her lover) the lovely lady is fanning on her darling who is reclining in bed." The poet begins the verse with *Machhipatan* and the second word is *manbhāvto*, which Singh has translated as "pleased." Yet the inclusion of the prefix *man-*, which roughly translates as "mind," "perception," or "heart," suggests a stronger feeling (*bhāv*) about the cloth. The word *manbhāvto* could suggest that the cloth is pleasing not only to the senses but to the mind.[92] The blouse from faraway *Machhipatan* has captured that lady's heart and intrigued her intellect.

In these metaphorical vignettes, the textiles possess intimate, sensual, and sophisticated meanings that please the mind and express love and longing. The couplets also attend to the materiality of textiles and the sensory experience, particularly the female experience, of receiving and wearing fine cloth. These couplets forbid fabric from being simply a commodity, traded blindly for monetary gain. Taken together, the inventories and the poems demonstrate that the attention to geographic derivation found in the *toshākhāna* did not fade once the cloth was put into use. Imported cloth accrued intimate meaning in cultural memory; foreign textiles became lodged in the mind when they were imagined wrapped around the body of the beloved.

An Inventory Rendered in Cloth Moving from numbers and texts to actual examples of cloth, a set of small-scale cotton textiles, likely imported into Amber from the region surrounding the port of Machilipatnam, speak in a similar idiom to the poems. The cloths themselves represent an account record of sorts: the textile artists who made them included representations of other types of textiles from throughout Hindustan. The cloths are also painted with scenes of loosely connected figures that seem to float in space, allowing for surprising relationships between proximate pairs. Like the poems, the scenes on these textiles draw faraway figures close together. In their material presence as small-scale wrappings or mats and in their depicted imagery of floating carpets and tents, these cotton cloths also provide visual representations of the kinds of layered, textile-covered spatial environments that the members of the Amber court inhabited.

These textiles have been classified as *rūmāl*s, using the Persian term, common in South Asia, for a handkerchief (literally for "wiping the face") that can apply to anything from ceremonial textiles to common washcloths. Another term that has been proposed is the Persian *sofreh*, which can mean a tablecloth or table linen.[93] While the precise name for the cloths in the seventeenth century is unknown, these textiles likely covered

platters of gifts given to an important person, between a bride and groom, or to an icon of a god in a temple.[94] The *rūmāl*s may have had a participatory role in the ceremonial rituals of the palace. As Frances Pritchett notes, textiles like *rūmāl*s punctuated the temporal structure of the day; cloths like these may have been spread on the ground to mark the formal transition between a mealtime and a subsequent activity.[95] Despite their figural scenes, therefore, these textiles should not be studied solely as though they are paintings. They had a physicality and spatial significance in the lived experiences of courtly life.

There are eight known *rūmāl*s that share a similar size, style of painting, and repertoire of figures. Of these, four bear inventory details, written directly onto the reverse of the cloth, that are consistent with the inscriptions found on textiles that came from the Amber court.[96] The cloths arrived at the Amber Palace between approximately 1652 and 1701. The earliest inscriptions are on figure 3.8 and include the dates of 1652, 1657, and 1666; followed by figure 3.9, which is dated to 1673; figure 3.10, which has dates from 1690 and 1701; and figure 3.11, with the date of 1701.[97] Textiles collected by the Amber court did not always immediately enter the storehouses of the Amber Palace. Many likely traveled as part of the Amber rulers' mobile military retinue or were kept at other palaces that the Kachhwaha maharajas occupied. The inventory markings on the Amber *rūmāl*s are a reminder of this; though the cloths, with their consistent style, seem to have been made around the same time, the dates on the backs of the cloths cover a half century. This suggests that the cloths were separated shortly after they were purchased, with one *rūmāl* returning to Amber in 1652 and the others held as part of Jai Singh's collections elsewhere and only receiving their inventory markings when they arrived in Amber at the end of the seventeenth century.

The inscriptions on the *rūmāl*s give not only the dates but also the measurements of the cloths in *gaz* and *girāh* (all of the cloths measure around two feet by three feet, or one by one-and-one-half *gaz*, with the exception of figure 3.8, which is nearly three feet by three feet). The textiles also include prices, including "9 rupees" and "8 rupees, 4 dams" or "4 rupees 8 dams."[98] The price of a contemporaneous painted cotton textile, over seven *gaz* in length and seven *gaz* in width, was given an inventory value of thirty rupees in 1690.[99] The Machilipatnam *chīnt* piece that cost thirty-two rupees in the 1699 inventory may have been comparable to the seven-*gaz* cotton textile, measuring sixteen feet on each side.

The *rūmāl*s were likely created in the area surrounding the port and commercial center of Machilipatnam, which served as an entrepôt for traders, mercenaries, and ministers from diverse backgrounds. Machilipatnam and its surroundings were, in the seventeenth century, part of the Deccan sultanate of Golconda, whose rulers, the Qutb Shahs, were Shiʿa Muslims who maintained a courtly aesthetic strongly influenced by Safavid culture.[100] On the *rūmāl* cloths, this can be seen in the bearing of the fashionable young men with their forelocks and in the long, flowing layers of robes, fastened at the center and tied with a belt, that some of the men and women wear. Courtly furnishings such as the fluted rosewater sprinklers and the floral carpets, as well as the graceful,

FIG. 3.8 Kalamkari *rūmāl*. Coastal southeastern India, attributed to Golconda. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1640–50. 32 in. (81.3 cm) × 35 in. (88.9 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1928 (28.159.3).

FIG. 3.9 Kalamkari *rūmāl*. Coastal southeastern India, attributed to Golconda. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1640–50. 24 in. (61 cm) × 36 in. (91.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1928 (28.159.1).

linear style of painting, similarly grew out of the contact between Deccani art and its Persian immigrant populations. At this moment in the seventeenth century, however, artistic styles had swayed through centuries of trade, religious pilgrimage, and political invasion, meaning that objects like the *rūmāl*s not only gesture west but also contain East Asian features, visible in the wispy cloud forms and the stylized, peach-colored blossoms. The flaming leaves may have emerged through Golconda's active trade with Southeast Asia (see fig. 3.8).[101]

The heterogeneity seen in these textiles recalls the geographic diversity of Amber's inventory collections. The *rūmāl*s themselves display the sensibility of the inventory; each small textile contains representations of a profusion of diverse fabrics (particularly in fig. 3.9). By collecting one cotton textile, the Amber treasury gained visual references to myriad textile-making techniques. The artist, painting the cotton cloth with a reed pen or *kalam*, portrayed fabrics that are block-printed, as on a nobleman's white and red-patterned garment. He has rendered the *bandhanī* techniques practiced in western India, which created the dotted tie-dyed effect of a servant's garment. A veiled woman, wearing anklets and a tight red and pink dotted *cholī* blouse, is at work on some embroidery in her lap, perhaps a piece of velvet with gold *zarī* thread. In the bottom right, a bearded man with a rifle slung over his shoulder and lively rabbits in his hand returns from hunting. He wears a red *jāma* with waving white patterns, possibly a combined silk and cotton *mashrū* textile from Gujarat. The pantaloons worn by the hunter reflect this peculiar sartorial innovation of Europe. The cloth of his companion's trousers evoke the uneven lines of ikat-patterned fabric, like the fabric known today as *teliā rūmāl*, which is produced by local weavers in the Deccan.[102]

The *rūmāl*s compress the space between figures and create amorous or ambiguous relationships between servants and masters, Hindus and Muslims, men and women. In figure 3.9, a Persianate nobleman with his ample moustache and wide turban reaches out his arm to cup in his hand the breast of a diminutive, red-clad woman who wears her hair in a long braid down her back. She holds up her hand to serve him a drink. Below are the two seated women whose attire conforms to female dress seen throughout South Asia, making it difficult to determine their place of origin. They wear long skirts (*ghāgrā* or *lehenga*) and the tight-fitting blouse, a *cholī* or *kanchukī*, mentioned in many of the poetic works. Each woman is fanned by a servant who stands on a raised platform. In figure 3.8, a male figure with sideburns and a Deccani turban presses his face into the neck of a courtesan. She wears a translucent *cholī* blouse, and either a full *lehenga* skirt or an *antariya*, a lower garment wrapped and tied around the waist. At the center of the lower garment, there is a contrasting piece of tightly pleated red fabric, an effect likely created by a supplemental length of cloth tucked in at the waist.[103] This style of wearing a contrasting, pleated sash can be seen in Deccani *rāgamālā* paintings from the seventeenth century but also in paintings from the Amber court, again confounding attempts to affix an identity or origin to this figure.[104] With her uncovered hair, this woman reveals her body to the viewer, even if the man's head obscures her face. Above, a reclining man is waited upon by two servants; one is a young man with the fashionable curling sidelocks seen in Safavid painting and the other is a woman with a tall rectangular hat. She wears

green pajama trousers and a long, tightly fitting red *jamā* that opens down the center and is cinched with a green sash. Her garments align more closely to male dress, and with her high hat and large earrings, she bears a distant resemblance to Deccani paintings of female mendicant *yoginī*s who wore more masculine clothing and their hair in a tall bun on top of their heads.[105] Nearly every figure on the *rūmāl*s bears something in hand, whether it be a peahen, a bolster pillow, or a sweet delicacy. As such, the viewer's attention is drawn to the sense of taste as well as touch. This sense of touch is evoked most clearly in figure 3.10, in which a reclining man receives a leg massage from a kneeling figure. His head is uncovered to reveal his curly hair, which may have signaled his origins in Africa. At the time this textile was made, prominent generals and officials of Ethiopian descent held high rankings in the courts of the Deccan.[106]

More generally, the *rūmāl*s display an attentiveness to skin color and to the ethnic variation among the figures on display. The dye colors used to render the faces and the exposed hands and feet of the figures range from the reserved, undyed white of the cloth itself to deeper pink, brown, and gray skin colors for figures such as the seated musician (see fig. 3.9) and the hunter wearing a *dhoti* and leading an animal on a leash (fig. 3.12). Clothing and facial features also create distinctions between the figures. On a *rūmāl* that is now held in the National Museum in New Delhi there is an ashen-skinned Hindu holy

OVERLEAF, FIG. 3.10 Kalamkari *rūmāl*. Coastal southeastern India, attributed to Golconda. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1640–50. 25¼ in. (64.1 cm) × 36 in. (91.4 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1928 (28.159.2).

FIG. 3.11 Kalamkari *rūmāl*. Coastal southeastern India, attributed to Golconda. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1640–50. 24⁷⁄₁₆ in. (62 cm) × 35¼ (89.5 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IS.34–1969.

man, known as a *sādhu*, whose skin is rendered in blue and whose legs are bound in a yogic band. An East Asian man is marked by his triangular hat. In figure 3.11, there is also a figure with his legs wrapped in a yogic band who is fully dressed. The descriptions of figure types, differing complexions, and forms of dress were part of Mughal and Deccani courtly discourse, where divisions along racial or ethnic lines did not necessarily predict political allegiance or rank at court.[107] The Mughal nobleman ʿAbd al-Rahim, the contemporary of the Bikaner ruler Raja Rai Singh, composed poems about the different castes of Indian women.[108] Recent work on Mughal military musters, which recorded the names and physical characteristics of the diverse soldiers who joined the army, has uncovered the complex and varied language deployed by Mughal officers for tabulating physical appearances. The descriptions are full of metaphor (a "sheep-eyed," "cat-eyed," or "deer-eyed" soldier) and capture the variations in skin color, such as "wheatish," "greenish," "reddish," or "white," that the dyers have also rendered in the cotton *rūmāl*s.[109]

FIG. 3.12 Kalamkari *rūmāl*. Coastal southeastern India, attributed to Golconda. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1640–50. 28¼ in. (71.8 cm) × 32¼ in. (81.9 cm). Cincinnati Art Museum, The William T. and Louise Taft Semple Collection, 1962.465.

The interactions on the textiles in particular give a glimpse into the diversity of female figures, some courtesans, some performers, some noblewomen, that appeared in South Asian courtly life. While the veiled women who sit alone, absorbed in their own pursuits, are likely of high rank, other women wait upon seated men. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, foreign women were taken by force after military victories or given as gifts between both Hindu and Muslim courts. As Ramya Sreenivasan recounts, Jai Singh's contemporary in Jodhpur, Maharaja Jaswant Singh, returned from a Mughal military posting in Afghanistan having enslaved ten Afghan singing women.[110] Rajput courts like Amber enforced strict hierarchies among women, the lowest of whom were domestic servants, while dancers and concubines occupied higher ranks. Although Rajput royalty focused on the purity of its bloodlines, there was some ambiguity at the highest rank of concubines, who were permitted to wear a veil like the Rajput queens.[111] On the textiles, however, not all relationships conform to strict gender roles or hierarchies, introducing themes of male intimacy familiar from Persian love poetry.[112] On a *rūmāl* in the collection of the Cincinnati Art Museum, the scene includes a depiction of embracing figures who wear male dress (see fig. 3.12).

If the textiles represented in the cloths resemble an inventory of cloth or an array of courtly faces, the relationships between the figures are reminiscent of the *Kapadā Chīntanī* and the *Kapadā Kutūhal*. The language of both courtly and more popular poetry was associative and descriptive, playing off puns and analogies that referenced the names of places, seasons, foods, and flowers. Long poems, like Biharilal's *Satsaī*, were assemblages of brief two-line passages of text (*dohā*), distributed without explicit connection to one another. Like these elevated couplets, and the more popular *Kapadā Chīntanī* and the *Kapadā Kutūhal*, the vignettes portrayed on the cloths are the visual equivalent of at least two lines of verse, such as the couplet about Machilipatnam cloth: "Pleased [in the mind and heart] with her *kanchuki* (blouse) of the charming *Machhipatan*, just presented (by her lover) the lovely lady is fanning on her darling who is reclining in bed." This is not to say that the artists of the *rūmāl* textiles were conversant in Rajput poetry; rather, in the mobile world of seventeenth-century military campaigns and traveling nobility, the Amber court and textiles made in the Deccan sultanate could embrace what Tony Stewart has called "shared metaphoric worlds."[113]

FIG. 3.13 Detail of fig. 3.10.

The Amber rulers may also have had a more direct connection in the commissioning of these textiles. In one *rūmāl* with inventory dates from the late seventeenth century, the renderings of the figures seem to share features with Rajput portraiture (see fig. 3.10). The *rūmāl* is set against a white background, which distinguishes it from the other three with their rose and violet backdrops. The top of the *rūmāl* is spacious and the figures of servants, lovers, and lounging men are interspersed with flowering palm trees and round, red rocks. The scenes of courtly life become elaborate and multifigured along the bottom edge. A mustachioed man, seated in an upright chair, is facing a woman—a dancer with a bare midriff and tight pajama trousers. With her arm poised above her head and her waist-wrap twisting around her hips, she seems to turn in time to the music played behind her (fig. 3.13). Three courtiers stand behind the seated figure, waiting on the man. One holds the ceremonial fly whisk used to announce royalty.

This *rūmāl* bears the dates of 1690 and 1701 (one a probable entry date and the other, an inventory mark made during a later assessment of the collection). The earlier of these dates comes just after the end of the reign of Maharaja Jai Singh's son Ram Singh, who ruled Amber from 1667 to 1688. Catherine Glynn identified the visage of Ram Singh from his earliest years at the Mughal court in the 1650s through his reign as maharaja of Amber (fig. 3.14).[114] Although mustachioed men recur on the *rūmāl*s, this figure, set apart within the textile, bears a strong resemblance to both early and late portraits of Ram Singh, and he sits on an upright chair similar to one seen in a joint portrait of Jai Singh and his grandson Kishan Singh (fig. 3.15).[115] The turbans that the

FIG. 3.14 Ram Singh of Amber. Mughal Empire. From the Late Shah Jahan Album. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, ca. 1650–58. 14 13/16 in. (37.6 cm) × 10 3/4 in. (27.31 cm). Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, The Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Gift of Paul Mellon.

FIG. 3.15 Mirza Raja Jai Singh with his grandson Kishan Singh. Ruknuddin, Bikaner. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1670. 8 7/8 in. (22.6 cm) × 5 13/16 in. (14.8 cm). British Library, London, Add. Or. 4244.

figures wear are different, however. The figure on the *rūmāl* wears a traditional Deccani turban.[116] Given its later inventory markings and its distinctive color palette, it seems possible that this work may have been crafted after the others and that the artist may have included a portrait of Ram Singh. It is equally likely, however, that the figure is a generic ruler, marked as such by the fly whisk behind him. This still raises the question of why he has been relegated to the bottom of the textile. What kind of hierarchy might this cloth have suggested to its Rajput royal owners?

Perhaps the best answer is that it resists a hierarchy; it is a pastiche, not a programmatic statement of power. It allows for the coexistence of multiple courtly practices—from foot massages to dancing women, from feasting to making love. In highlighting a diversity of people, but also an array of cloth garments, animals, flowers, and foods, the *rūmāl*s resonate with the poetry of praise that elevated the Kachhwaha ruler Man Singh not for the breadth of his realm but for the list of territories that he had traversed and the variety of fruit trees, visitors, and textiles that he collected from afar. Even the spatial arrangement on the cloths evades any rigid order by carving out a pocket of territory for each figure through an intricately painted mat that resembles the *rūmāl* form itself. The textile mats depicted within these cloths, some drawn in recessional perspective and some as flat rectangles, provide just enough stability to tether the figures to a place, however mobile and provisional it might be.

These textiles embody a cosmopolitan aesthetic but also a distinctive political orientation found in the mobile culture of traveling Rajput kings who served as Mughal generals. The Amber court may have more closely resembled what Roy Fischel has described in the context of the Deccan sultanates (a region where the Amber rulers spent long periods of time) as the conditions of the non-imperial state, which substituted a political language of "plurality and flexibility" for the hierarchical, vertical ordering of the imperial regime.[117] As Fischel writes, "the result of these processes was not only increased multiplicity, but also the persistence of horizontal identities and networks that were not confined to any geographical and political region."[118] The aesthetic of the *rūmāl*s is similarly flexible and horizontal. Moreover, as objects that themselves shifted and were laid out to create space, the *rūmāl*s both depicted and embodied this sense of dynamism. In their visual motifs, the *rūmāl*s rendered an imagined cosmopolitan sphere of diverse figures; in their role as objects, *rūmāl*s activated conversation, fostered a social atmosphere, and marked the rhythm of courtly life.

The Pageantry of Imported Cloth

In this final section of the chapter, I lay out the architectural spaces of the Amber Palace and the ideas and objects that animated its daily life. Imagery of humans and gods met with materials that reflected light and dispersed water. Though situated atop a fortified site, this was a palace that was built for moments of pleasure. Onto the gleaming marble floors and the burnished plaster walls entered textiles of every variety: silk velvets made with metal-wrapped threads that could only be used in sites of low light; knotted-pile woolen carpets spread in gardens and courtyards; brightly dyed cotton floor coverings that were cooled by the marble beneath. These textiles responded to changes in seasons and times of day and night.

After analyzing the chronology of when extant textiles entered the Amber storehouses, I propose potential sites where this variety of textiles appeared in the Amber Palace in order to reconsider the meaning of this Rajput architecture with its textile layer restored.

Mirza Raja Jai Singh spent more time in military camps than at his Amber palace, and as such, the rhythms of his career were more aligned with textiles than with permanent architecture. The *Pādshāhnāma* by ʿAbd al-Hamid Lahori, an account of Shah Jahan's reign, records only occasional short intervals of a year or two during which Jai Singh was released from the emperor's service. Jai Singh participated in nearly constant military campaigns in the Deccan, Gond country, the northwest frontier, or in the Afghan city of Qandahar between the late 1630s through his death in 1667.[119] From April 1637 until March 1638, for instance, Jai Singh was granted leave to rest in Amber. The *Pādshāhnāma* does not record another rest period for Jai Singh in Amber until late in 1642. From this date, Jai Singh remained in Amber until October 1644, with the exception of a brief visit to Ajmer to wait upon Shah Jahan during his pilgrimage. Over the next twenty years, Jai Singh would often be sent into the northwestern reaches of the empire to Lahore, Bukhara, the Hindu Kush, Qandahar, and Kabul. He fought on behalf of Dara Shukoh near Benares during the wars of succession over the Mughal throne and then came to the court of the newly installed emperor ʻAlamgir in 1659. He remained there, with periodic visits to nearby Amber, until 1664. His moment of greatest recognition came in 1659, when he received the *mansabdārī* rank of 7,000, the highest that could be achieved by any figure not of royal blood.[120] He was then promoted to viceroy of the Deccan to fight against the increasingly powerful Maratha ruler Shivaji in 1664. After succeeding in convincing Shivaji to visit the imperial court in Agra, Jai Singh and his son Ram Singh were blamed when Shivaji escaped arrest in Agra and returned to the Deccan. In 1666, Jai Singh masterminded a massive and hugely expensive Mughal military campaign against the sultanate of Bijapur, which ended in defeat. He died in 1667 in the Deccan city of Burhanpur while making his way north.[121] His rank had been reduced and he had been censured by ʿAlamgir; he was never repaid for the money he had spent on the Bijapur siege.

His successors, Ram Singh and Bishan Singh, experienced similar estrangements from home. Ram Singh spent ten years away from Amber between 1667 and 1677, fighting against the kingdom of Ahom in Assam, and only returned home to Amber from 1677 to 1678. He was then sent to the Khyber Pass in Afghanistan from 1681 until 1685. After falling out of favor with the emperor, he died in Kohat "in sorrow" in 1688.[122] Eleven years later, Bishan Singh (r. 1688–99) died in December 1699 in the midst of a bitter Afghan winter.[123] He had been sent to Afghanistan to accompany a Mughal prince and had been required to bring half of his family with him. Over the course of their combined nearly eighty years of rule, the Amber rulers were officially allowed to return home for approximately fifteen years in total, and often for less than a year at a time before rejoining the emperor's military or paying their respects at court.

When the Amber rulers traveled, they likely brought a large collection of courtly textiles with them, including tents, carpets, saddle covers, and ceremonial clothing. At the same time, however, the textiles, with their inventory markings that are consistent

in style, format, and script, suggest that by the late seventeenth century, many of these carpets and hangings had likely returned home to Amber. Comparing the record of the Kachhwaha rulers' travels with the inventory markings on their textiles, two basic observations seem possible. First, on the dozen or so known, inscribed textiles, the initial inventory dates for the furnishing textiles seem to correspond with the years when Raja Jai Singh or Ram Singh was at home in Amber, or just afterward. There are dates from 1633, 1639, 1645, 1646, and 1679. This suggests that the raja either brought home textiles from his travels that were then inventoried or purchased new textiles during his periods at home.

A second point is that the dates when additional inventory assessments were made also coincide with or follow shortly after times of strife or the deaths of the Kachhwaha rulers. For instance, many of the textiles bear inventory markings dating to 11 Shawwal 1076 (April 16, 1666), the year when both Jai Singh and Ram Singh were censured for their failures in Bijapur and the escape of Shivaji. Interestingly, the next audit numbers occur less than a year and a half later, on 1 Rabiʿ al-Sani 1078 (September 20, 1667), three weeks after Jai Singh's death.[124] In the little we know about the dates of inventory records, it seems to have been unusual to have inventory records dating only one year apart, which could signal the two different causes (one insecurity, one death) of the audits. Letters from Emperor ʿAlamgir suggest that objects in Jai Singh's immediate possession in Burhanpur were demanded after his death by the imperial court in order to keep them from Jai Singh's son Kirat Singh, who had been accused of poisoning his father.[125] Whether the items in Jai Singh's possession traveled to the imperial court or, contrary to instructions, returned straight to Amber to be inventoried, we know that existing objects were counted and measured in this tumultuous month after Jai Singh's death. The other two recurrent dates on the back of textiles and carpets in the collection

FIG. 3.16 Amber Palace and Fort, Amber, Rajasthan.

include 1690, after Ram Singh's 1688 death, and 1701, after Bishan Singh's 1699 death and the assumption to the throne of Jai Singh II.[126] It is also notable that the account record (*jamākharch*) of the *toshākhāna* cloths was composed in 1699. It would make sense that the new raja's household would order an assessment of the value of the textiles in the palace storage during these times.

When the Kachhwaha rulers returned to their home territory in Amber, the diversity of spaces created by textiles from Lahore or the Deccan approximated the actual geographic places to which they had campaigned on military duty and the diversity of peoples they had encountered. Overall, the textiles with Amber inventory markings are distinctive for either being floral in pattern or containing figural scenes. These cloths could transmit the tangled outside world to the most cloistered spaces of the *zanāna*. The fact that half of Bishan Singh's family was forced to come with him to Afghanistan also serves as a reminder of those who remained behind in Amber when the ruler traveled.[127] Histories of the Kachhwahas tend to follow the ruler on his military campaigns, but the palace life would have thrummed on without the ruler. Thus at the same time as textiles may serve as stand-ins for a peripatetic military life, they also contributed to the political and social workings of the broad, extensive royal family networks in Amber, using the textiles and continually purchasing more.

Amber's fort and palace complex is perched high above the street level in the craggy landscape of the Aravalli Hills (fig. 3.16). At the foot of the complex lies Maotha Lake. The palace can be divided into three different types of spaces: the realm of the *zanāna*; the semi-public domain of living spaces, pleasure pavilions, and offices (the *mardāna*); and the performative or ceremonial public spaces (fig. 3.17).[128] Giles Tillotson writes that one of the most distinctive features of Rajput palaces is their asymmetry and irregularity, as they were built into the hillsides of rocky cliffs. The result is "unpredictable" movements through space.[129]

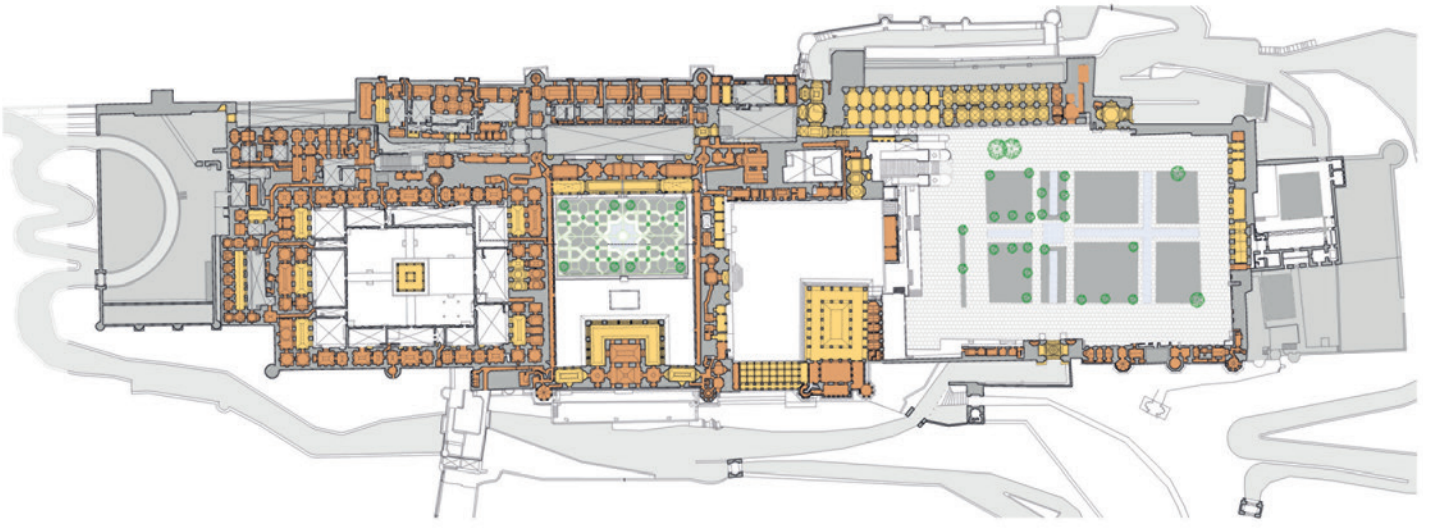


FIG. 3.17 Plan of the Amber Palace Complex. Courtyard dimensions left to right: Man Singh Mahal 123 ft. 2 in. (37.56 m) × 94 ft. 8 in. (28.86 m); Jai Mandir 135 ft. 3 in. (41.31 m) × 122 ft. 4 in. (37.30 m); Dīwān-i ʿĀm 149 ft. 6 in. (45.59 m) × 156 ft. 5 in. (47.70 m); Jaleb Chowk 204 ft. 9 in. (62.43 m) × 299 ft. (91.16 m). Amber Conservation and Development Report. M/s Minakshi Jain Architects, Ahmedabad, India, 2006 (unpublished document).

The precise dating of the buildings of the Amber Palace is uncertain, but the entire complex was most likely completed by the early eighteenth century, before Jai Singh II moved the court to the newly built city of Jaipur in 1727. At the southwestern end is the residential palace, thought to have been built under Maharaja Man Singh (r. 1589–1614) in the late sixteenth century. In the Man Singh Palace section, high walls of two to three stories, lined with balconies and punctured with small, cut-screen windows, surround a wide, open courtyard. The small chambers on the southernmost wall and the gardens behind the palace comprise the section where the women of the court lived in the *zanāna*.[130] The walls of the Man Singh Palace today are plastered with a rough, matte plaster that conforms in color and texture to the dry environment of Rajasthan. Man Singh's court poet Narottamdas, however, describes vibrant mural paintings that once decorated the walls of the courtyard and its surrounding chambers. The paintings depicted *rāgamālā* scenes, images of Krishna and his cowherdesses, of lovers, as well as "pictures of cranes, peafowl, parrots, and various animals and flowering plants, in bright shades of red, yellow, green, and other colours."[131]

Wall paintings from the late sixteenth century that remain at the Kachhwaha's Bairat pleasure pavilion and at the funerary pavilion constructed a few years after Man Singh's death help to approximate the style of painting once seen on the walls of the Man Singh Palace (fig. 3.18).[132] Asok Kumar Das sees these paintings as a compromise between the "folkish" traditions of Rajasthan and the "popular Mughal" style that spread throughout Akbar's and Jahangir's reigns.[133] In theme, the paintings at the Bairat pavilion incorporate the images of Krishna and the *gopīs* described at the Man Singh Palace but also include scenes from the Persian romance of Layla and Majnun and

FIG. 3.18 Wall and ceiling paintings with courtly scenes, Bairat pavilion. Bairat, Rajasthan. Late sixteenth century with later additions.

renderings of Mughal durbars. The paintings have been damaged and repainted, but they approximate the visual elements of the period's paintings.[134] The figures are very stylized. They are painted with thin pigments and use formulaic gestures. The fantastical tree under which the ascetic Majnun sits seems to sprout sharp needles. Layla supplicates Majnun from across a divide of white, pearly space; the only marker of her femininity is the pointed hat that was fashionable among women of the day.

The contrast between these paintings and the textiles that may have entered the private spaces of the palace is stark. We saw in the previous chapter that the future emperor Jahangir sent a Persian figural silk robe with images of male and female beloveds to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner (see fig. 2.1). The fabric of the robe was a Safavid textile woven with sensitively rendered faces, smooth skin, and pensive expressions. Safavid silk textiles also likely began to filter into Amber courtly life by the late sixteenth century. With their muted, pastel colors and naturalistic scenes, the textiles contrasted with the aesthetics of the painted walls.

Since the early twentieth century, a set of mid-seventeenth-century velvet cloths with female figures has been attributed to the Amber court collection (fig. 3.19).[135] Too costly to be used in public processionals, these cloths were more likely to have been viewed or hung in an interior, darkened space, such as a bedchamber. In theme, they echo the extant imagery on the pavilions—they feature scenes of women who stand languidly, their bodies forming a crescent. The figures on the woven silk textiles, though not life-sized, are nearly two feet tall, corresponding in size to the painted figures that may have been rendered on the walls.[136] Yet in style, they are distinct. The women are dressed in a combination of European and Persian garb, and each delicate detail of their faces has

FIG. 3.19 Panel. Iran. Silk velvet with metal-wrapped threads, ca. 1610–40. 29⅜ in. (74.6 cm) × 85½ in. (217.2 cm). Gift of Anonymous Donor. Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, 1977-119-1.

FIG. 3.20A Velvet textile length with pairs of maidens. Iran. Silk velvet, silver bouclé, and silk pile with metal-wrapped threads, 1600–1625. 77 3/16 in. (196 cm) × 22 7/16 in. (57 cm). Gift of Mrs. John David Eaton, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (962.60.1).

FIG. 3.20B Detail.

been woven in soft, black silk. To create texture, the weavers have incorporated curls of twisted metallic thread into the velvet pile. The challenge of weaving such large figures with so many colors and the extensive use of gold that creates the glimmering ground below the soft silken pile of the velvet elevate these textiles to a position among the most luxurious objects from the Amber collection.[137]

This makes what happened to a related group of imported silk velvet textiles in the Amber collection all the more remarkable. On extant pieces of a mid-seventeenth-century Safavid velvet, strands of silk were pulled out from the women's faces and new features—including a *bindī*, a nose-ring, and a u-shaped *tilak*, a mark of devotion to the god Vishnu—were embroidered in orange and metallic threads onto the women's faces (fig. 3.20a).[138] The slim-necked wine ewers that the women were previously holding were removed and replaced by round pots of flowers (fig. 3.20b). The dates of these revisions are uncertain—the visible embroidery on the Royal Ontario Museum's piece in Toronto appears to date to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.[139] Yet the revisions themselves could have been refreshed to replace earlier amendments.

Whether made by professional, male embroiderers or by female members of the court, these adaptations to the velvet cloths assimilated the textiles into the Amber court. Mary McWilliams identifies the small caps that the figures wear as a "dandified version of the traditional woolen cap worn by dervishes."[140] Though decidedly not "actual Sufis," the female figures wearing the hats provide an indication that the textiles are expressive of not only worldly pleasure but divine beauty as well.[141] The aesthetic relationship between the local style of paintings and the Persianate cloth becomes one not of opposition but of dialogue. If these were hung in the palace next to the painted walls with scenes of Krishna and his devotees, the effect of the *gopī*s is intensified, even though some of the cowherdesses are Rajasthani and some distinctively Persian. By layering the painted walls of their private spaces with imagery in distinctive styles, the Amber patrons were not masking their local or vernacular idiom; instead, they were reinforcing the themes by displaying them in different guises.

Through a passageway, residents could move to the adjoining spaces of courtly pleasure and official business. Set around a garden with fountains are pavilions attributed to Mirza Raja Jai Singh's reign in the seventeenth century.[142] On one side of the courtyard is the Sukh Mahal, a pleasure palace cooled by water that is pumped beneath the floors and out into the garden. For the poet Biharilal, the architectural setting, with its watery pleasures, recalled the effects of a beautiful *panchtoliyā* fabric (a cloth also listed in the *Ā'īn-i Akbarī*): "Clad in fine white [*panchtoliyā*], she's at her loveliest; her body's gleam is like a lamp behind a waterfall's cascade [*jal chādar*]."[143] The cloth is likened to a screen of water through which the radiance of the women shines through. Chandramani Singh writes that this describes a "particular part of palace architecture, where they have terraced fountains and in between two levels, are several rows of small niches, carved in the wall. These niches had small lamps during the night and at this place, water coming down looks like a screen. The poet's description can be verified by the niches at the Amber palace."[144] While the architecture might stand as confirmation of the poet's

visual imagery, the poetry, in turn, provides evidence that cloth, like a lamp-lit waterfall, could help to simulate an atmosphere of natural pleasures in a courtyard space (fig. 3.21).

Looking over the courtyard is the mirror-covered Shīsh Mahal, also called the Jai Mandir (fig. 3.22).[145] Biharilal drew the Shīsh Mahal into his poetry in a different way. He wrote, "Jai Shah's reflected glory shines in the mirrored hall / as though the god of love had massed a corps to conquer the world."[146] The poet plays on the multiplying effect of the mirrored fragments: Jai Singh, in his amorous state, appears to be many men when he confronts his reflection in the Shīsh Mahal. This also serves as a guiding image for how the Amber rulers, generals who commanded multitudes, existed in the palace of their hereditary kingdom. The textiles of their collections bolstered the fiction, like that seen in the mirrored hall, that the raja, though more solitary at home, was still surrounded by the crowds of the imperial court or the military encampment.

Fragmentary evidence suggests that the Amber rulers and their fellow Rajput noblemen participated in more relaxed courtly assemblies when they were stationed away from their hereditary kingdoms. Members of the Kachhwaha royal family had given themselves over to too much enjoyment in the Deccan; Man Singh's son Bhau Singh died of an "excess of wine drinking" in the Deccan in 1619.[147] We glean a sense of the sociability of the Deccan from Jai Singh's military correspondence (the *Haft Anjuman*) during his time in the Deccan, although it is largely overwhelmed by tactical considerations. Jai Singh was known for his diplomacy. Before his invasion of Bijapur, he made it a practice to woo high-ranking officials from the Deccan court by paying them bribes. Upon his promotion in rank, Jai Singh received from ʿAlamgir two caskets of "Jahangiri" perfume (*ʿitr*), in addition to elephants and robes, hinting at the enjoyment of precious scents even at this moment of heightened military tension.[148]

Earlier in the century, sub-imperial Mughal cities in the Deccan were renowned for their entertainments and *mehfil*s, which were enjoyed by such figures as Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner and the Mughal nobleman ʿAbd al-Rahim, and later by Jai Singh. At these events, transgressions of social norms and hierarchical status occurred as the assembled company enjoyed wine, food, and music and recited poetry.[149] As Dipti Khera has written, spaces of pleasure in Rajasthan too offered opportunities for the "erasure of hierarchies" and for "decreased boundaries" between otherwise structured political entities.[150] In their temporary nature and their imagery of blooming gardens, textiles also heightened the possibilities for this sense that an assembled group occupied a space of sensory enjoyment outside of more structured relationships. In tents scented with rosewater, Khera writes, the perimeter of painted cotton cloth provided "an aesthetic and material

FIG. 3.21 Fountain, Sukh Mahal, Amber Palace, ca. seventeenth century. Amber, Rajasthan.

FIG. 3.22 Shīsh Mahal, Amber Palace, ca. seventeenth century with later additions and repairs. Amber, Rajasthan.

FIG. 3.23 Varadī Rāginī, fourth wife of Dīpak Rāga. Amber. From a *rāgamālā*. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 1675–1700. Page: 14 in. (35.56 cm) × 10 in. (25.4 cm). Image: 8¾ in. (22.22 cm) × 6 in. (15.24 cm). Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Gift of Edwin Binney 3rd, M.74.88.2.

means of merging the real and ideal moods of places and thereby the real and desired bonds among courtly communities."[151]

At Amber, textiles merged these "real" and "ideal" communities along various axes. Textile-enclosed spaces could establish the primacy of the Kachhwaha rulers as kings within their own realm. The pleasure pavilions at the Amber Palace were relatively modest in comparison with the gardens and sites of enjoyment being constructed throughout the Mughal realm. During the reign of Jahangir in particular, the emperor and other noblemen, including the Kachhwaha ruler's relative Ram Das Kachhwaha, focused on constructing lavish gardens, water tanks, and pavilions in the region of Kashmir.[152] Textiles worked to place the rulers at the center of a garden or could approximate the ability to bring together a vast range of fruits and flowers. At the same time, textiles with imagery of Deccani architecture, Kashmiri flowers, and Persian gardens connected the social world of the Amber court to the more extensive, layered, and less hierarchical courtly assemblies that existed far beyond their palace walls.

There are relatively few paintings that give us a visual sense of courtly life at Amber; in general, there is an absence of painted works that can be traced to the court, something that Catherine Glynn tentatively attributes to "the fact that the Amber rulers were away from Amber for so much of the time."[153] In one late seventeenth-century *rāgamālā* painting from Amber, a figure whom Glynn has identified as Ram Singh sits upon a terrace in front of low marble and sandstone pavilions (fig. 3.23). Rosewater sprinklers and paintings of blue-and-white ceramics holding fruits dot the architecture. Below, textiles or wall paintings bearing brightly colored flowers, set against jade and crimson backgrounds, frame the ruler's profile and provide the richest colors in the painting. Ram Singh's garments and those of his female attendants are translucent and lightweight. The upper body of his white *jāma* has been dyed brown, in a fashion seen in other portraits of the time. The white of the *jāma*'s skirt billows at his feet, contrasting with what is now the deep color of the bolster pillow and mat, a color that may be oxidized and have once been silver. The woman who stands directly in front of Ram Singh, holding a fly whisk and a garland of white flowers, wears a sheer white garment that has a pattern of loose "sprinkles" of yellow color, like the *chīnt* textile described in the *Kapadā Chīntanī*. A white-ground textile with curling green vines and red flowers lies beneath the bare feet of the three standing female attendants, and the red-dyed soles of their feet curve softly over the cotton cloth.

Textiles like the flowered floor-spread in figure 3.24a reflected the needs of the seasons, often evoking

FIG. 3.24A
Floor-spread. Coastal southeastern India, probably Golconda. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1630–40. 99 in. (251.5 cm) × 129 15/16 in. (330 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IM.160–1929.

FIG. 3.24B Detail.

absent delights of more temperate geographic locations and garden settings. The floors of the Sukh Mahal are marble cooled beneath by water; during the hot summer months, they may have been covered with thin cotton cloths like these to allow the refreshing feeling of the stone to come through the floor. The Amber court collected at least five large cotton floor-spreads, the earliest pair of which have inscriptions that date to 1639 and three others from 1645.[154] The 1639 cotton textiles may have been floor-spreads or they could have been dais covers (*takht posh*) used on a raised platform. They are now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Calico Museum in Ahmedabad and are suggestive of how a cloth could transmit the bright greens and blooming flowers of regions that had more rainfall, like India's southeastern coast where they were made. Unlike the *rūmāl*s, with their warmer colors, the cloths are painted with flowers against a bright white ground and feature lively pairs of hunters and embracing lovers. Parrots perch in the slender trees and deer scamper across the flower-filled ground. The scenes are energetic. The red trees bend and snap; bright green vines curl toward the center of the field. The animals spring up and look back alert. The hunters carry blue muskets, searching for fat birds in the trees. A wide array of flowers—bearded irises (*Iris germanica*), effulgent lotuses, and plump elephant apples, as well as imagined, composite blooms—burst open, splaying their petals outward (fig. 3.24b).[155] In the heavy, dry heat of midsummer, such carpets could reinvigorate those reclining on the floor.

In the winter months, knotted-pile carpets kept out the winds on the fort's hilltop site. A large set of floral carpets woven within the Mughal Empire connected Jai Singh's court to the visual pleasures of gardens and flowers but also to the stylistic developments across artistic media. As Ebba Koch and Robert Skelton have noted, the style of representing flowers in single stalks, with attention to each bloom, grew partly from the visual interest in flowers and animal life at the Mughal court but also through contact

between Mughal artists and European natural history texts.[156] Floral representations can be seen carved into the marble and sandstone of the Taj Mahal, the best known of Shah Jahan's constructions, as well as on the walls of the Amber Palace's Sukh Mahal. On the carpets, single-stemmed blooms stand pertly in rows set against deep red and blue backgrounds. Many of the carpets bear labels suggesting that they were purchased in Lahore in the seventeenth century. The carpets with inscriptions from the Amber collection are not of the highest, "imperial" grade, which includes the carpets woven with a pashmina pile and silk foundation, but are instead made from Rajasthani sheep's wool with cotton threads interspersed with silk threads in the foundation weft.[157] The knots per inch, a marker of the fineness of a carpet, are "respectable though not astonishingly high."[158] Of the large body of known examples of these flower-style carpets, the majority were either originally in the Amber collections or remain in situ in Jaipur.[159]

A very long carpet, measuring over twenty-four feet, bears a full field of flowers (fig. 3.25).[160] Woven with cotton and silk in the weft and sheep's wool in the pile, the carpet's floral array stands out against a red ground dyed with *lac*. Recent research on this object examined the wide range of floral motifs on the carpet, plants that by the seventeenth century were traveling throughout the globe.[161] The collection of exotic flowers

FIG. 3.25 Floral carpet. Mughal Empire, possibly Lahore. Cotton warp; cotton and silk weft; wool pile; asymmetrically knotted pile, seventeenth century. 109 7/16 in. (278 cm) × 289 3/4 in. (736 cm). Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon—Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, T61.

recalls the poetry of Amrit Rai, who attributed a worldly assortment of trees to Man Singh's orchards. The composition of the carpet also emphasizes variation. Although the arrangement of the plants in upright rows could be repetitive, the weavers have interspersed unpredictable forms of clouds, tiny sprigs of flowers, and spreading leaves. The types of flowers do recur: large lilies, poppies, irises, and crown imperials (*Fritillaria imperialis*) proceed along the horizontal axis, but the weaver has evoked a varied palette of colors. While some of the irises are a deep, rich, blackish brown, traced with orange, others are a lighter red and would disappear into the background without the light border outlining their petals. The heads of the lilies hang heavily, dropping their pollen toward the ground where they seem to birth new flowers below. The naturalism of the weaving captures delicate textures: the petals of the yellow parrot tulips in the borders have their characteristic frayed edges, traced out in crimson, while the weavers have captured the striation on green leaves by inserting thin veins of yellow. While the overall pattern of the carpet bears a sense of regularity, particularly in the borders, the way that the flowers and leaves reach toward each other, filling in each other's negative space, gives a sense of a garden growing, with plants seeking out the sun. When they laid out these floral carpets, the Amber rulers could evoke in their palace the succession of

flowers that occurred not only in formal gardens but in the freedom of nature. This overlap between woven and natural wonders corresponded to the imagery of Mughal court poetry: Emperor Jahangir, who supported the burgeoning carpet-weaving industry in Lahore, wrote verses in praise of a meadow of flowers in Kashmir: "There were flower-carpets and fresh rosebuds / The wind fanned the lamps of the roses / The violet braided her locks / The buds tied a knot in the heart."[162] In this verse, Jahangir marvels at the capacity of nature to weave its own splendor with reference to the violet's braids and the buds' tying of "knots," the central component of carpet-making.

Particularly on the floor, carpets and textiles were used in contrasting layers. A painting of Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur (r. 1638–78) approximates this visual arrangement. Jaswant Singh was Jai Singh's contemporary and the successor to Gaj Singh, the maharaja beside whom Jai Singh is seated in the painting that opened this chapter. Jaswant Singh sits in his pleasure pavilion upon a wool carpet, layered beneath a lighter, cotton, possibly embroidered floor-spread (fig. 3.26). He rests on a bolster pillow covered with a gold-ground silk textile that may have been woven in Iran or at a South Asian weaving workshop in Agra, Ahmedabad, or Lahore. If we imagine the Metropolitan Museum *rūmāl*s in this scenario, covering a precious object, the maharaja would have assembled beneath, around, and in front of him a knotted-pile carpet woven in Lahore or the Safavid Empire, a cotton mat possibly made locally, a *rūmāl* painted in the Deccan with figures from across South Asia, and a cushion with silken fabric woven at an elite workshop in Agra, Ahmedabad, or Lahore. His clothing adds more geographic complexity—his *jāma* may have been made of muslin from Bengal, his silk *patkā* or sash woven perhaps in Gujarat.[163] The red *chik* screen covering the white plaster doorway of the pavilion was likely of local manufacture, made by winding red thread around fine reeds. The garden in the foreground, while grown in Rajasthan, is an echo of the flowered pattern seen on the garden carpet at the base of the pavilion.

FIG. 3.26 Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur listening to music. Jodhpur. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1660. Page: 12 15/16 in. (32.8 cm) × 9 in. (23.1 cm). Image: 9 1/4 in. (23.5 cm) × 7 1/4 in. (18.5 cm). National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Felton Bequest, 1980, AS28–1980.

The cloth covering of this space was assembled for reasons of temperature, as the dark blue clouds in the sky suggest a cooling wind. The maroon-ground carpet, the bolster pillow studded with red roses, and the wine-red *chik* screen set an amorous mood as the maharaja listens to women from his *zanāna* perform music. Finally, the geographic diversity of the cloths on hand symbolizes the maharaja's ability to purchase costly luxuries from afar but also the cosmopolitan nature of his court, at which Afghan singers entertained the Rajasthani raja and imported carpets may have brushed against Bengali cotton.

The Amber rulers certainly entertained in their spaces of pleasure. But if the company at home was less exciting than the *mehfil*s of the Deccan, wall hangings purchased for

Mirza Raja Jai Singh's court in the mid-seventeenth century bore figural subjects that were large, naturalistic, and, perhaps most significantly, foreign and excitingly complex. By the mid-seventeenth century, the maharaja likely collected wall hangings from southeastern India with figures that stretched four feet tall, sitting in fully described rooms with swags of flowers behind them and a balcony ledge in front. On the textiles, couples draped in jewels and clad in patterned doublets embraced clandestinely, their arms and legs intertwining (see chapter 4). These textiles brought social interactions home.

The use of textiles reached their most monumental scale in the public and ceremonial spaces of the Amber Palace Complex. At the north end lay a large courtyard that held the pillared Dīwān-i ʿĀm, or Hall of Public Audience; on the southern end of the courtyard could be found a Turkish-style bath. A picturesque colonnaded space to the east once housed the administrative offices. Looking out from the eastern windows, it is possible to see Maotha Lake below, in the middle of which there now floats the Kesar Kiyārī, a garden that grew saffron.[164]

Brass and iron rings that remain on the walls of this courtyard indicate the extensive use of curtains, tents, wall coverings, and ceiling decorations that once hung there. In the painting of Ram Singh, we see these rings in action and the mechanics of how the textiles may have been suspended (see fig. 3.23). Although it is only partially shown, there is a curtain hung on two tiny blue-silver rings. The inventory markings on extant textiles suggest that many textile hangings were used in this way because they were each designated as an individual curtain (*parda*). In the painting, dangling beneath the curtain, we also see the twisted rope, tied in a bow, that holds the folded curtain up and that suggests, in its swinging weight, that the curtain may soon be unfurled. The permanence of the rings contrasts with the ephemerality of the textile decorations; after festivals or seasonal requirements were complete, the fabrics would be folded away into the palace's storage sites.

The Amber rulers likely erected tents that covered the spaces of the courtyard beside the Dīwān-i ʿĀm, an area that measures about 150 feet on each side.[165] Measurements of Mughal imperial tents suggest that they often exceeded the built architecture beside which they were erected. A Mughal tent described in 1653 rose to over one hundred feet (thirty-two meters) high, three times as tall as the nearby hall.[166] Huge lengths of precious, lampas-woven silk cloth, held in the Calico Museum in Ahmedabad and measuring over twenty feet long and ten feet wide, stand as evidence for the scale of seventeenth-century durbar tents. While these have not been identified as having an Amber provenance, a large-scale lampas dais cover or canopy does derive from the Amber storage.[167] The Amber collections also once contained many *qanāt*s, the textiles used to formulate the walls for tent structures. Among these cloths are lampas-woven silks as well as painted cotton textiles with pointed arches and elegantly rendered single-stemmed plants and flowers.[168]

The Kachhwaha rulers used the cloths that formulated these temporary tent structures both within the walls of the Amber Palace and when traveling as part of the Mughal emperor's military retinue. The tent was thus a connection between the mobility of Jai Singh as military general and his stability and permanence as the king of Amber. Carpets

were another source of continuity. Over twenty of the floral carpets in the Amber collection have irregular shapes, such as octagons or curving archways, which imply a history of specific commissions from the Lahore workshops that likely produced them (fig. 3.27). The dimensions of the shaped carpets do not fit precisely with the architecture of the Amber Palace.[169] Jon Thompson has proposed the possibility that these shaped carpets from Amber were made to fit around the structures of a pavilion tent instead.[170] With their precise, interlocking forms and shared pattern vocabulary of flowers, these carpets retained the aesthetics of the tent when they returned to the storehouses of Amber. Some carpets are simply monumental. A pair of durbar carpets acquired from Lahore in 1656 measure 63 feet long by 15 feet wide.[171] Each carpet has a pattern of slender trees set within rectangular niches. Laid end to end, these carpets could cover nearly the entire length of the ceremonial courtyard next to the Dīwān-i ʿĀm.

Cloth hangings created new walls and textiles covered the sun, the walls, and the floors. They masked the existing textures and colors of Amber, helping to "blur the boundaries between fact and fiction."[172] The maharaja's public durbar in a Mughal-style tented hall could obscure the tension between distinctive cultural or religious forms of Rajput life and negotiate a transformed role for the sovereign. Just as quickly, the Mughal setting could be exchanged for a backdrop more suitable for the temple deities of Amber. The Jaleb Chowk was the final, northernmost courtyard. It was used as a parade ground for Jai Singh's troops but also as the entry point for the marble Shila Devi Temple, built during Jai Singh's reign, which was devoted to Shila Mata, a manifestation of the goddess Kali brought back as an icon from Bengal by Man Singh in 1604.[173] During the celebration of Dussehra, the culmination of the Navratri festival that marks the triumph of Rama over Ravana, the Jaleb Chowk would be transformed into a celebration of Rama's mythical victory. In Jadunath Sarkar's telling, the maharaja of Jaipur continued

FIG. 3.27 Shaped carpet. Mughal Empire, Kashmir or Lahore, ca. 1650. Cotton warp, cotton and silk weft, wool knotted pile. 181½ in. (461 cm) × 75½ in. (191.8 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift of John Goelet, 66.228.

FIG. 3.28 *Pichhwāi.* Machilipatnam or Palakollu. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, with gold, early nineteenth century. 81⅛ in. (206 cm) × 78¾ in. (200 cm). TAPI Collection, Surat, 99.1954.

to ride up to Amber to celebrate this holiday into the 1920s, paying his respects to Shila Mata.[174] The textures of the space would be illuminated, full of lights to mark the triumph of good over evil and gleaming with the swords and cannonry of the military troops.

In the latter half of the seventeenth century, the Kachhwaha's other sacred icon, the image of Govinda Deva, was traveling from its temple in Vrindavan to its final destination in Amber, where it was installed by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II in 1713.[175] A mobile icon, like a moving royal, demands a peripatetic temple setting. In Rajasthan, Krishna icons like the Govinda Deva were set in front of narrative cloths that detailed the time of the year and the season of play for the god, just as rajas and emperors were set in front of lavish backdrops for their appearances at durbar.[176] The large-scale cloths for Krishna icons, called *pichhwāi*, vary with the ritual calendar and the yearly seasons, providing a temporally specific backdrop that is sensitive to both the heat or chill of the month and the colors in bloom in the surrounding hills. The earliest examples of *pichhwāi* are cloths made in southeastern India.[177] The *gopī*s in the scenes have the same smoothly drawn faces and large eyes as those seen in Deccani painting (fig. 3.28). The techniques for making these *pichhwāi*s are those of kalamkari (also spelled *kalamkārī* or *qalamkārī*)—the designs are painted with mordants and resists and dyed directly onto the cotton—while the later, Rajasthani tradition of *pichhwāi* painting involves applying mineral pigments to a gessoed cloth surface.[178] Jagdish Mittal has argued that the earliest *pichhwāi*s were brought back from the Deccan by traveling Gujarati (and potentially Rajasthani) devotees, following a similar path to the northwest as many of the textiles examined in this chapter.[179]

The political and religious aesthetic of the Amber court could accommodate ritual cloths that had circulated through foreign markets and heavy carpets that evoked faraway spaces. The mobility and flexibility of these objects connected the stationary architecture of the court to the peripatetic life of the military camp and the mobile temple of the icon in transition. The textile layers of Amber responded to seasons and moods and to the sway of political tides. In private chambers and public ceremonies, cloth allowed the ruler, his wives, courtiers, and the populace of Amber not only to inhabit Mughal and Rajput identities but also to imagine the spaces of more distant courts.

Amber-Jaipur and the Making of a Cosmopolitan Aesthetic The start of the eighteenth century marked a period of consolidation for the principalities of Rajasthan. Rajput rulers began picturing themselves in portraiture as kings instead of Mughal noblemen, a shift that "corresponded with a new degree of autonomy and a new concern with regional, rather than imperial relationships."[180] They rendered the distinctive pleasures of their palaces in monumental paintings.[181] This political shift also altered the textiles of Amber and the newly built city of Jaipur in the early eighteenth century. Instead of figuring an imperial authority or cosmopolitan cultural milieu, objects came to express a more coherent Amber-Jaipur identity.

In this period, Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II began construction on the city of Jaipur, located five miles from the Amber Fort. At the same time that he began building his city, he also started using tax incentives and land allotments to bring merchants and artisans, from goldsmiths to textile producers, to take up residence in Jaipur and in the nearby textile-producing area of Sanganer.[182] Palace records of the textile workshops—including those of the bleaching, dyeing, block-printing, weaving, and embroidery *kārkhānas*—suggest that artisans migrated from Gujarat, Agra, Delhi, and Ajmer to work for the Amber-Jaipur court.[183]

The motifs on textiles became less a vehicle to import exotic imagery and instead represented the pleasures of the city. This can be seen on two embroidered throne cushions held in the storage of the Jaipur City Palace (figs. 3.29 and 3.30). The cushions are two feet square and are embroidered with twisted silk thread. Rosemary Crill has recently dated these objects to 1730 and has linked them specifically to the marriage festivities that brought together the Amber and Bundi courts.[184] The cushions would have

FIG. 3.29 Cushion cover, a prince and nobles listen to music in a garden outside of a palace. Probably Jaipur. Cotton, embroidered with silk thread, chain stitch, 1730. 21⅝ in. (55 cm) × 20 in. (51 cm) × 8¼ in. (21 cm). Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, Jaipur, Tc/D.2.

FIG. 3.30 Cushion cover, a princess and her maids watch a boat from the banks of a lake. Probably Jaipur. Cotton, embroidered with silk thread, chain stitch, 1730. 20⅞ in. (53 cm) × 20 in. (51 cm) × 9 in. (23 cm). Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, Jaipur, Tc/D.3.

accompanied the flat, rectangular throne used by Mughal and Rajasthani royalty, and not a European-style chair throne. The throne also had a matching cover with a border that includes similar pictorial embroidery.

On these cushions, Rajput figures ride on horseback before palaces made of plaster and sandstone. The palaces have the *banglā* style roof seen at Mughal forts and at the Amber Palace, but they also have Rajasthan's distinctive high-balconied walls. The figures wear Rajput dress and they occupy pavilions set beside lakes, like Maotha Lake near the Amber Palace. The women in the scenes are arrayed like the *gopī*s before Krishna and they set out across the landscape playing music. The colors of the silk embroidery thread are the bright vermillion red and saffron of Rajasthani textiles, not the more subdued pinks and light blues of the Persianate cloths imported a century before. The maharaja, set in a scene outside, presides over a garden like the Kesar Kiyārī, the saffron garden, a space entirely of his own making.

The history of imported textiles in Amber emerges through the unadorned numbers of inventory records, the writings of popular poets, the suggestive scenery on painted cotton *rūmāl*s, and the processional spaces of the Amber Palace. While the Amber rulers may, at times, have emulated the textile practices of Shah Jahan, they layered the Mughal imperial aesthetic with objects from even further afield and with a fealty to vernacular architecture and imagery. They embraced heterogeneous cloths and maintained an aesthetic of assemblage. The embroidered pillows grew out of an altered political and aesthetic landscape when Rajput motifs became part of the pattern repertoire, replacing what had once been imported goods.

The treasurer's records, the merchant's vocabulary, the material objects, and architectural evidence expand the parameters for understanding the aesthetics of mid-seventeenth-century Mughal Hindustan. Past studies have focused on the encounter between Rajput and Mughal painting and architecture. This chapter grapples with the surprising cosmopolitanism of Amber's material culture. It is difficult to gloss the hanging of Safavid gold-ground velvets alongside local mural paintings; the relationship between Amber and Iran was neither one of imperial domination nor one of neighborly competition. Perhaps it requires an alternative means of interpreting the cultural contact brought about by textiles. Silks from the south carried prestige and earned a returning husband a more loving reception from his wife. A *rūmāl* painted with scenes of noble comportment drew faraway courts closer together and established horizontal linkages between Amber, the Deccan, and West Asia. These are cultural encounters of the senses, of the body, of the heart; they bespeak the impulses of desire, diplomacy, and friendship. The textile layers of the Amber court expressed a patchwork political aesthetic that eschewed static identities and gave visual form to a shifting environment of transformation and exchange.

Chapter 4

THE FAME OF MACHILIPATNAM CLOTH

In 1665, while accompanying Emperor ʿAlamgir (r. 1658–1707) on a slow-paced overland journey from Delhi to Lahore and onward to Kashmir, French physician and traveler François Bernier had occasion to marvel at the floral fabrics that comprised the emperor's tent structures (fig. 4.1). Bernier described the advance team that moved ahead of the imperial entourage with a second, identical set of tents so that the camp would always be in place when the emperor arrived. One hundred workers leveled the land and erected strong *qanāt* panels, placed between poles, that formed the physical border of the imperial encampment. The emperor's largest tent where he engaged in business while on military tour as well as his five other main tents were lined with "beautiful hand-painted chintz [*belles Indiennes à fleurs au pinceau*], manufactured for the purpose at Maslipatam, the ornamentation of which is set off by rich figured satin of various colors, or embroideries of silk, silver, and gold, with deep and elegant fringes."[1] The emperor's private tents too were "surrounded by small kanates [*qanāt*s], of the height of a man, some lined with Maslipatam chintz" that represented a hundred different kinds of flowers.[2] The blooms on the cloths, Bernier writes, were "so natural and colours so vivid" that the tents they lined seemed to be filled with living flowerbeds (*parterre*).[3]

Bernier is surprisingly specific about the textiles' geographic origins. He asserts repeatedly that the painted cotton cloths he witnessed came from "Maslipatam," a site known also as Masulipatnam and Machilipatnam, that he correctly locates elsewhere in the text as the main port of the Deccan sultanate of Golconda. He attributes the textiles' fineness not only to the naturalism of the floral patterns but also to the waters around Machilipatnam: "the superior colors of the Maslipatam chittes or cloths, painted by the hand, whose freshness seems to improve by washing, are . . . ascribed to the water peculiar to that town."[4] In these descriptions, Bernier captures not only the visual but the material uniqueness of the region—the colors, forged in the special waters of Machilipatnam, "seem to improve by washing."

Bernier's description is vivid and frequently quoted. Within the *Hadiqat al-Salātīn*, a chronicle written by Nizamuddin Ahmad, a Persian resident in Golconda, we have an earlier account, told from a different perspective, of how Mughal emperors favored Machilipatnam chintz. In a description of Machilipatnam, the chronicle tells how every year, the then-reigning emperor Shah Jahan sent a "trusted person" to "Machlīpatan" to handle the purchase of these same painted cotton cloths that Bernier describes (called *qalamkārī* in the text).[5] Nizamuddin Ahmad wrote his account at the end of 1050 Hijri (late 1640 or early 1641 CE), when Shah Jahan had deputized Mirza Sadeq Qazvini, who went by the nickname "Chishro," to arrange his *qalamkārī* cloths. Qazvini first visited the sultan of Golconda, who held jurisdiction over the port of Machilipatnam. Golconda was ruled by the Qutb Shah dynasty from their fort in Golconda and nearby capital city of Hyderabad, which lay over two hundred miles inland from Machilipatnam. Qazvini brought with him an official letter (*manshūr*) filled with kindnesses from the emperor and a ring with rubies that Shah Jahan had taken from his own hand. Because of this valuable gift, he gained much attention at court. According to Shah Jahan's decree,

Qazvini was then supposed to commission the kalamkari cloth (*qalamkārī pārcha*) in the same manner as had the previous years' officials and to use the workers of Machilipatnam to make it. Qazvini himself then traveled from Golconda to Machilipatnam to make sure that this was done.

This account suggests a high degree of specificity about Shah Jahan's patronage of *qalamkārī*. It means that he intentionally deputized an imperial official to carry out the commission, that he first had Qazvini deliver a letter and a gift to the rulers of Golconda, and that he desired continuity with the previous year's product. It also affirms the importance of traveling to the site of production: Mirza Sadeq Qazvini was directed to visit Machilipatnam in order to hire workers from the surrounding area. The way that Nizamuddin Ahmad frames this as an annual task indicates a consistent renewal of cloths for the Mughal emperor. To my knowledge, this is the first evidence for direct Mughal patronage of *qalamkārī* and is among the earliest documented uses of the Persian term for cotton cloths painted with mordants and dyed.

As we have seen at the Amber court, "Machilipatnam" cloth was given a high monetary value in inventories. It earned a lover's appreciation in popular poetry, and it was specifically commissioned by the Mughal emperor on a yearly basis. The designation of "Machilipatnam" as the origin of these cloths actually obscures the fact that the textiles were made in regional villages located along the Krishna and Godavari rivers that lay within one hundred miles of Machilipatnam, including but not limited to Petaboli (Peddapalli) and Palicol (Palakollu). Machilipatnam, a sizable port city with a mid-seventeenth-century population of around 100,000, served as the collecting site and the emporium to purchase cloths destined for the Spice Islands of Southeast Asia, Ottoman and Safavid lands, and onward to Europe.[6] The surroundings of Machilipatnam were far from the only sites that produced high-quality painted cotton textiles, a craft whose reach extended south along India's eastern coast. Yet the repeated mentions of this site suggest that something about "Machilipatnam" had a precise significance and cultural cachet in the wider landscape of South Asian textiles—a significance that has typically been overshadowed in the historiography by the global reach of Machilipatnam cloth.

This chapter focuses on the period from approximately 1630 to 1690 during which the textile trade in the vicinity of Machilipatnam expanded considerably and a wide array of patrons sought out the "Machilipatnam" cloth. The textual evidence, along with visual cues, suggests that the individual artisans and workshops engaged in painting cloths for the Amber court, the Mughal emperors, and early European patrons and others may have overlapped and supplied cloths for multiple patrons. While styles of painting do shift over the course of the seventeenth century, subtler details and shared materials also indicate possibilities for continuity. The recurrence of Machilipatnam in Mughal, Rajput, Deccani, and European records is exciting for the linkages it might establish between what have been thought to have been distinctive, separate strands of practice: the production of cloth for use within Hindustan and the textiles made for export.

In this chapter, I propose further reasons that Machilipatnam cloths hold significance for a history of seventeenth-century textiles: in both their materiality and their visual content, these cloths tell us about the nature of the soil and water, the paths of

FIG. 4.1 Tent hanging (*qanāt*). Coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1645. 80¾ in. (205.1 cm) × 115 in. (292.1 cm). RISD Museum, Providence, RI, Gift of Miss Lucy T. Aldrich, 37.010.

laborers, and the shape of urban festivities that can only be recognized at a more intimate scale. While the name Machilipatnam was recognized as a source of fabrics from Delhi to London, certain more granular meanings of the place were lost when the cloths were traded. When looked at up close, the immediate environment can be seen to have soaked into the fibers of the cotton, as the colors of the dyes shifted with slight changes in water quality. In records of production, we also see that the bleachers, dyers, and painters who created the cloths were moving throughout the region known by the British during the colonial period as the "Coromandel Coast."[7] As artists became more mobile by necessity, stylistic features once associated with single localities spread among various production sites, making the textiles documents of both consumer desires and artisanal movement. The figural scenes on extant large-scale painted cotton textiles from around Machilipatnam also ground the textiles in a sense of a singular time and place. While the textiles' motifs have been dismissed as mere repetitive patterns, large-scale hangings render in their material and visual details the artisanal and elite experiences of cosmopolitanism, urbanity, and merchant culture in the seventeenth-century cities of the Islamicate Deccan.

The main objects in this chapter are cotton fabrics that have been painted with a sharpened bamboo pen using mordants and wax resists and then dyed a brilliant range of colors. These cloths were known by many names throughout South Asia. In the records of the Amber court they were known as *chīnt*, the Hindi word referencing the colorful nature of the cloth that meant to "spray" or "sprinkle," which entered English as the word "chintz." Bernier refers to the textiles both as *chittes*, which he defines as cloths painted by hand, and as *indiennes*, the French word that could encompass both painted and block-printed textiles.[8] The term *qalamkārī pārcha* (kalamkari cloth), which surfaced in Nizamuddin Ahmad's account, combines the Arabic word for a reed used as a pen (*qalam*) and *kārī*, a Persianate suffix, which means, generally, "work."[9] The name for these "pen-worked" textiles emphasizes the freehand nature of the production with a pen, as distinguished from block-printed textiles, whose patterns derive from the repeated stamping of a printer's block, although in the subsequent centuries both painted and printed textiles have come to be known as "kalamkari."[10] In the craft of kalamkari, the artist draws the outlines of the designs with charcoal and then takes up a bamboo pen with an egg-shaped reservoir to first apply liquid mordants, metallic oxides that prepare the cloth for the dye colors in which they will be submerged, rather than adding pigments directly as in other forms of painting (fig. 4.2). John Irwin writes that we find in this group of textiles the painting technique, "carried to its furthest point, whereby the final effect obtained is so like free-hand wall-painting as to make it easy to forget that they are not really paintings at all but each a complicated exercise in the chemistry of dye-fixing."[11]

FIG. 4.2 Modern kalam (*qalam*). Bamboo, cotton, and thread. Workshop of M. Viswanath Reddy, Sri Kalahasti, Andhra Pradesh, 2013.

While scores of later seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century painted cotton textiles can be found in Europe that are the products of

the exponential growth in European imports at this later period, a group of earlier works, including the Amber collection's *rūmāl*s discussed in chapter 3, were primarily made for South Asian patrons and remained in India until the twentieth century. These textiles are generally dated to the first half of the seventeenth century.[12] Although painted cotton textiles were also made in the west in Gujarat, further south along the Coromandel Coast, and in Burhanpur, the figural and floral textiles made with the brightest red dyes in the seventeenth century were likely produced somewhere near Machilipatnam, as evidenced by the consistent style of the painting and coloring of the dyes. John Irwin called this group of works the "Golconda cotton paintings," for the sultanate of Golconda in which Machilipatnam is situated.[13] The shared visual style of these earlier cloths has led one scholar to propose that many of the extant textiles were originally composed together as a single cloth.[14] Whether connected as a single large-scale hanging or as a corpus of works with a consistent style, these textiles are the best physical evidence for what Mughal, Rajput, Deccan, and European records suggest was a lively trade in vibrant painted textiles from Machilipatnam.

The individual artisans who produced seventeenth-century textiles are difficult to recover, beyond the rare mention of such figures as Ramdas, the dyer who benefited from Akbar's largesse, or the Safavid poet and weaver Ghiyath al-Din ʿAli-yi Naqshband. While manuscript painters at the Mughal court worked directly with their imperial patrons and their names are often recorded, weavers, dyers, and cotton painters worked at a social and often geographic remove from those who purchased their products.[15] They also labored in complex, collaborative workshops. For this reason, their identities and their subjective experiences remain challenging to access. This was true regardless of patronage. In European and Mughal records alike, the level of specificity, particularly for kalamkari cloth, usually sharpens only enough to yield geographic, not personal, information, including the village or site of production. In the few extant lists of individual artisans, they are documented by their places of origin rather than by their given names. This preferencing of place over person heightens the sense that geography and regional specialization were particularly important in the production of painted cotton cloths, but it also reduces the human dimension in the historical record.

If textile production in this period only rarely elevated its artisans to the point of individuating them by name, the intricacies of its manufacture worked to humble its patrons. Most other craft processes could be relocated to the *kārkhāna*s, or royal workshops. For instance, Ulfati Sawaji, the Iranian poet-author of the *Rawāʾih Gulshan-i Qutb-shāhī* (1641), which is a description of the city of Hyderabad and the Qutb Shahi rulers of Golconda, portrays the *jamdār khāna* in the center of the palace as "the place where precious items and costly commodities from clothes to arms are kept. Men of different trade and skilled crafts persons from various countries decorated their products in the various corners of this house so that it became [the] *nawādir khāna* (the house of rarities and excellence)."[16] The author describes a courtly workshop, centered at the palace, where craftspeople demonstrated their skills at making. By contrast, the processes of bleaching and dyeing necessary for kalamkari textile production relied upon a source of running water with certain chemical properties; the artisans required firewood for

boiling their vats of dyes, and roots and fruits for their dye materials. These crafts were more immobile by necessity. Although the Mughal imperial court is said to have tried to bring Machilipatnam cloth painters to set up a workshop in Delhi or Agra, their efforts were unsuccessful.[17] Those who desired the cloth were mostly compelled to travel to remote sites of production to procure kalamkari textiles.[18] The geographic specificity also limited the volume of cloths produced, adding another constraint for seventeenth-century patrons. From the Mughal nobility to the English, Dutch, and Danish trading companies, the ways that different patrons and merchants negotiated these challenges with localized artisans is part of the art of kalamkari cloth in the seventeenth century.

Context of Production: The Coromandel Coast in Transition The region of the Deccan, where Machilipatnam is located, boasted vibrant trade and cultural exchange in this period, but it was also among the most politically turbulent areas in the seventeenth century, wracked by war, droughts, governments in transition, and the nascent forces of European colonialism.[19] The flourishing of trade, but also the upheavals that occurred in the seventeenth century, reshaped artisan labor and its patronage, ultimately transforming the visual qualities of painted cotton textiles. The independent sultanates of the Deccan, including Golconda, Bijapur, and Ahmadnagar, operated both within and beyond the Mughal sphere of influence. The Mughal Empire pursued wars against the sultanates of the Deccan throughout the 1630s, yielding the conquest and annexation of Ahmadnagar and deeds of submission in 1636 from Bijapur and Golconda that resulted in a large tribute payment and a formal, though largely nominal, submission to Mughal rule. Throughout the 1630s and 1640s Golconda and Bijapur campaigned against their neighbors to the south and west. Hostilities between the Mughal army and Bijapur and Golconda sparked again in the 1660s, with the Mughal forces led by the previous chapter's Mirza Raja Jai Singh. In 1674, Golconda allied with the powerful Maratha leader Shivaji, funding his campaign into Karnataka and alarming Emperor ʿAlamgir. In 1682, ʿAlamgir relocated his court to the Deccan for a better position from which to lead his army. The Mughal army mobilized against Bijapur, and Bijapur conceded defeat in 1686. In 1687 ʿAlamgir laid siege to Golconda Fort, where the final Qutb Shahi sultan, Abu'l Hasan (r. 1672–87), had taken refuge. After an assault of eight months, the fort fell to ʿAlamgir's troops, ending the reign of the Qutb Shahi dynasty in the state of Golconda.

Starting in the first decades of the seventeenth century, European trading companies had begun establishing outposts in ports dotting Golconda's coast and further south along the Coromandel Coast.[20] The Dutch Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC) gained permission to trade in Golconda in 1606 and was allowed to conduct its commerce under decreased duties.[21] The English East India Company (EIC) followed suit, establishing their presence in Machilipatnam in 1611.[22] Throughout the seventeenth century, the Dutch VOC and the English EIC were mindful of the fact that the

FIG. 4.3 View from the English East India Company factory building in Machilipatnam, Andhra Pradesh, 2013.

European trading companies were in Golconda "upon terms by which we possess what we there have, but [are] also under their protection."[23] When Anglo-Dutch relations broke down in three midcentury wars (1652–54, 1665–67, 1672–74), trading company officials were adamant that hostilities not be brought onto South Asian territory, fearing that one of the regional rulers in southeastern India might intervene on the other company's behalf. The English EIC in particular knew that its fort in Madras could not withstand an attack from the army of Golconda. More importantly, officials feared hostilities with Golconda because in their aftermath it would be impossible to "reintegrate us in our trade."[24] The companies traded at the pleasure of Golconda's government and were obliged to give *pishkash* (offerings or gifts) and silence intra-European conflict in order to maintain that privilege.

The Portuguese, followed by the Dutch and the English, had worked to solidify their trade outward from Machilipatnam, using it as a base for commerce with Southeast Asia, the Persian Gulf, and the Middle East (fig. 4.3). While it is easy to lapse into an anachronistic reading that gives undue importance to the European trading companies, in actual matters, they struggled to gain a foothold along the Coromandel Coast throughout the seventeenth century.[25] They scrambled to negotiate relationships with the governor of Machilipatnam, the sultan of Golconda, other European trading companies, and the various eastern sites of trade, including ports in present-day Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, and Thailand.[26] As demand for kalamkari textiles grew in Europe in the latter part of the seventeenth century, European East India companies, and particularly the VOC, sought to control the entire production process of creating the Coromandel Coast's kalamkari cloths. The company merchants conspired to recruit textile painters to work exclusively for their factories and sought to create a monopoly over the acquisition of cloth from various artisans. More often than not, their intentions were thwarted. In their attempts to keep straight the codes of courtly gift-giving and to evade taxes, European merchants appear as latecomers to a thriving, centuries-old trade between ports in the Deccan and sites throughout the world.[27]

The Making of Kalamkari Cloth The material history of painted cotton textiles has a decidedly geographical dimension. To make a single painted cotton cloth, raw cotton, much of it grown in the center of the Deccan plateau, was transported to the eastern coast in bales by bullock across the craggy landscape. The caravans that carried the cotton returned with salt from the coast. The cotton moved into the homes of spinners and weavers, where it was spun by women of the agricultural classes, and then woven in family homes to a standardized width.[28] After bleaching in citrus and animal dung and drying in the sun, the cotton yardage was distributed, along with the patron's patterns, to painters who worked in the kalamkari technique.

The cloth was first soaked in a grainy yellow mixture made from ground myrobalan fruit and buffalo milk, which gave it a soft, dusty texture. After it dried, the tannins in the myrobalan fruit worked as a ground for the application of an iron mordant that reacted with the tannins to create the black outlines. The fat in buffalo milk helped prevent the outlines from spreading, while the other components in the milk—sugars and

calcium—"brightened" the dye colors, although even today the precise chemistry behind this effect is not known.[29] The head of the workshop first sketched out the design in charcoal. As seen in contemporary artist Lavanya Mani's work, designs emerged from the fine black line of the iron mordant created from iron scraps fermented in a bath of sweet jaggery (fig. 4.4). As painters worked, they squeezed the liquid out of an egg-shaped reservoir filled with wool, cotton, or jute to absorb the liquid and wrapped with thread. After the outlines were laid down, the painter added pigment in subtle ways (fig. 4.5). Areas designated as red, pink, or purple would be filled in with a colorless alum mordant made visible with a small amount of pink from a sappan wood dye. The cloth would then be boiled in a red dye bath. Fine white lines, painted on with wax or mud, protected parts of the cloth that would remain the original white color when the textile was then dyed. Before submersion in an indigo dye bath, any parts of the design that were not intended to be blue had to be covered with wax to protect their colors from the indigo.[30] The last dyes added were yellow dyes because they were more fugitive. When the dye baths were complete, the cloth was bleached again and laid out to dry, a process that did not dull the red as a modern chlorine-based bleach would but rather enhanced its brilliance.[31] It was then starched with rice starch, beetled (or beaten), and polished to give it a glazed finish.[32] While the painting on kalamkari cloth draws the eye, it was the quickly finished part of the process. By contrast, the slow, accretive process of adding dyes and wax, interspersed with periods of boiling and drying in the sun, saturated the cloth with color and gave it its distinctive value.

If contemporary practices are any indication, the senior-most painter was also involved in the preparation of the paint materials—in crafting the dye recipes and in setting up the red and yellow, though not indigo, dyebaths. The participation of the head painter in the dyebaths suggests that the seventeenth-century kalamkari workshop was always a collaborative, composite site of both cloth-painting and dyeing.[33] The painters of cloth created their works with the mordants and pigments of dyers. The distinction between dyers and painters is often very vague in European records. A head weaver dyed his own yarns or hired someone to do so. Painters, who were literally painting with dye mordants, also fixed the dyes in the same processes used by dyers. Professional dyers did exist, as Ian Wendt notes, but their titles in European records are confusing. Those who were responsible for dyeing salampore cloth red, for instance, were referred to as "painters," even though they painted no designs.[34] The European records show an interest in painters, and an absence of mentions of dyers, implying that their authors may not have recognized completely where the value of their products lay. If one reads

FIG. 4.4 Tree of Life (process image). Lavanya Mani. Cotton, hand painted with iron and alum mordants, 2013. 72 in. (182.88 cm) × 48 in. (121.92 cm). Private collection, Mumbai.

FIG. 4.5 Unlikely Planet (detail, process image). Lavanya Mani. Cotton, hand painted with iron, alum, and tin mordants, 2018–19. Gallery Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai.

FIG. 4.6 Tent hanging. Coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1640–50. 91 in. (231 cm) × 76 in. (193 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IS.19–1989.

European records against the grain, painters and dyers reveal their twinned crafts when they congregate near good water sources and in proximity to sites with ready access to dye materials.

A single object reveals how kalamkari textiles were the products of a dyer's vat, in addition to a painter's hand. The kalamkari cloth in figure 4.6 dates to the same decades as the figural *rūmāl* textiles from the previous chapter, but it departs from those textiles in style and thematic content. The hanging, fashioned as a *qanāt* for a tent, features a *gandabherunda*, a fearsome two-headed bird from Hindu mythology that holds two elephants in its beaks.[35] The painter's work is virtuosic: the beady eyes and scaly skin of the *bherunda* are echoed in the toothy texture of the long, thin leaves above. The rendering of the figures is especially impressive given that the "paint" was a liquid iron or alum mordant dispensed from the end of a wooden stick. The difficulty lay in keeping the liquid mordant moving along the cloth in an even line, without letting it pool. The painter has also used resist-work that had been applied as wax. The areas that have been kept white, such as on the paired birds' red-spotted feathers, were created by applying wax with a metal-tipped pen before the mordanting and submersion in a red dye bath. The painter's visual vocabulary is wide-ranging, encompassing New World pineapples and flaming ogival medallions.

What distinguishes this object, however, is its brilliant colors crafted from metallic mordants and plant-based dyes. Orange, maroon, and green saturate the blooms and leaves, giving them a living texture that belies the flat white plain weave of the cloth. These colors could only be coaxed patiently from multiple dyebaths. Turmeric served as a yellow dye and could be applied directly to the cloth or could be combined with indigo to produce green.[36] Pomegranate rinds produced a deep, mustard-colored dye but could also create *pistāʾī*, or pistachio-colored green. The barks of various trees, such as the *tūn* cedar and the *babūl*, yielded browns.[37] Each veiny line within a purple flower required an application of a slightly different composition of alum mordant than was used for the other parts of the petals.

But the most persistent, pulsating red colors of the cloth are from the *chayaver* or chay root (*Oldenlandia umbellata*), a dyestuff unique to southern Asia (fig. 4.7).[38] Everything dyed with the red chay root appears to spring forward: the flaming vines and arched top wings of the *bherunda*, the rich lotus flowers, and the chevrons of the white and red pattern of the cloth's internal border. The root of the chay plant is in the same family as the ubiquitous red colorant, madder root (*Rubia tinctorum*), a dye plant known worldwide by the seventeenth century.[39] Yet the chay root's tenor is richer and more concentrated. Madder dye contains three chemical compounds (alizarin, pseudo-purpurin, and purpurin) that, when combined with a mordant, yield red, rose, and purple colors. The thin shoots of the chay root, however, carry only alizarin.[40] The result is a concentrated, unadulterated crimson hue.[41]

The quality of the chay root itself also mattered. The northern Coromandel Coast boasted superior chay root, which grew best in the wild in the sandy soil of the local riverbeds of the Krishna delta.[42] The governor of Machilipatnam held an exclusive lease on land across the river from the town of Petaboli where wild chay root grew.[43] Dutch sources suggest that chay root was also cultivated in northern Sri Lanka and the vicinity of Madurai in South India, and it grew in the Puri region of Orissa and in Bengal.[44] The southern Coromandel Coast was said to grow an inferior form of chay root, however, and dyers working near the port of Madras imported chay root from the northern Coromandel Coast for dyeing.[45] Given the interdependence between agricultural production and the dyestuffs of chay root and indigo, it was most convenient for dyeing and painting centers to be located near regions where the dyestuffs were grown, such as Petaboli for chay root or the indigo-producing site of Nagelwancha located between Golconda and Machilipatnam in the northern Coromandel Coast.[46] An attention to dye materials also reshapes understandings of export trade. It has often been noted that textiles exported to Britain predominantly have a white background color, as opposed to the "sad" red grounds referenced in a set of procurement instructions.[47] In replacing the red backgrounds of the cloth, British merchants were eliminating what in some ways were the most unique characteristics of the textiles while also saving on costs by not having to use as much chay root on the cloths.

Chay root itself was also traded from the region around Machilipatnam to other sites in South Asia, suggesting the high value of the dye material.[48] In a recent collaborative dye analysis project, we found that chay root had been used to dye the brilliant red poppy flowers on a set of cotton textiles that were likely once part of a large hanging or floor covering (fig. 4.8a).[49] The arrangement of the lush, vibrant pattern in regularized, individuated units has led to the textile's attribution to Burhanpur, a Mughal city in the northern Deccan that has wall paintings with similar poppy patterns (fig. 4.8b).[50] The city was well-known for producing single-color red cloths, although these were dyed with a different red colorant of *āl*, known as Indian mulberry (*Morinda citrifolia*).[51] If the cloths were painted in Burhanpur, the chay root may have been imported from near Machilipatnam, a distance of five hundred miles

FIG. 4.7 Chay root (*Oldenlandia umbellata*). Donated by the Indian Forest Department, 1878. Economic Botany Collection, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, EBC 53776.

away. The textile raises the question: Is its most salient place of origin the site where it was painted that gave it its poppy pattern or the sandy soil where its singular red dye root grew?

The washing and dyeing processes for cloths were also extremely sensitive to the quality of water. In the seventeenth century, an EIC official in the southern town of Pulicat complained that "as the water here is so bad and brackish," cloths washed in it "have no good luster." Artisans had to carry the cloths to "Salves [Salure?], at the least six Jentes [Gentoo] leagues, and being in another government are forced to pay junkan [tax] upon every cloth or painting."[52] Poor water quality meant that the cloths themselves had to be moved for washing.

The regions around Machilipatnam boasted unique water conditions that improved dye colors. The decaying seashells lining the region's inland rivers increased the calcium content in the water, deepening the vividness of the red dyes.[53] Rajarshi Sengupta has

FIG. 4.8A Fragment of a floor-spread. Possibly Burhanpur. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, late seventeenth century. 66¾ in. (169.5 cm) × 142 in. (360.7 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Alice and Nasli Heeramaneck Collection, Gift of Alice Heeramaneck, 1982 (1982.239a).

FIG. 4.8B Detail.

found that it was also the mixing between the salty and "sweet" waters in these estuarial sites that affected the dye colors achieved.[54] The special alchemy of water composition and dye materials was not always translatable, which more firmly fixed dyers close to their water sources. We marvel at the distances that these cloths traveled along maritime trade routes, forgetting that seventeenth-century cloths could move much further than their makers because artisans, and their material conditions, were more fixedly tied in place.

Artisan Roots and the Need for Mobility While recent histories tend to celebrate mobility as evidence of artisanal autonomy and the ability to achieve better conditions, artisans primarily moved in seventeenth-century southeastern India because of unwelcome and unsolicited disruptions. European observers in India from this period incorrectly assumed that artisans required only "a shady tree" to work under and sought to collect various artisans involved in cloth-making to work at factories located by the ports.[55] The ideal of artisan flexibility was most true for weavers, who could dig pit looms and set up their loom frames in a variety of places. As a result, weavers and company officials were involved in a complex dance of negotiations whereby the Dutch and English competed to hire weavers. Weavers did not like to be rushed, but when they were, they wrote in a petition that they could "cheerfully bear it if we have but Beetle and Tobacco."[56] Because of the huge demand for Indian textiles in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Prasannan Parthasarathi suggests that weavers had "enormous autonomy" and thus "determined the quality and the quantity of the yarn that went into a piece. . . . merchants often had little choice but to take the cloth that weavers delivered."[57]

While weavers could be tempted with tax-free tobacco and low-cost rice, washers, bleachers, and dyers required specific ecological conditions to be able to run through the cycles of heating cloth, drying, soaking, and washing. They slip in and out of the European records as the East India companies tried to lure them to work. Washers and bleachers are among the most overlooked artisans in this process, but in the seventeenth century, they were in great demand. A professionalized group of artisans with their roots in the role of the village *dhobī*, skilled washers and bleachers took on increasing importance with the rise of the export trade in Indian cloths.[58] Washers and bleachers required lemon or lime juice, *dhobī*'s earth (a sand made of decayed white granite that forms a crust on the soil and is scraped off when it hardens after the rain), sheep or cow dung, lime extract from seashells, alum, and rice starch.[59] European records suggest that bleachers were especially dependent on an abundance of citrus fruits for the astringent component in bleach: all cloths woven in the Lucknow-Agra area were sent a great distance to Gujarat for bleaching because the plentiful lemon fields in the region ensured the bleachers' access to citrus and a higher quality of bleached cloth.[60] Cotton textiles could only be bleached in periods of time with continuous, bright sunshine, a requirement that restricted textile production on the eastern coast to the dry weather months.

Yet in the seventeenth century, the lives of artisans became unstable and many were induced to move due to armed invasions, famine, and scarcity.[61] In earlier periods, artisans oppressed by high taxes had chosen to relocate.[62] Yet there is little evidence for the

same degree of movement among artisans before the seventeenth century, suggesting what Vijaya Ramaswamy has called the "unsettled conditions" of the period.[63] European narrative accounts, collected in the EIC and VOC record books, chart the movements of artisans. At times, an artisan's surname will indicate his village of origin, linking a washer or painter with a site that he vacated for better opportunities elsewhere. In the village of Gondawaram near the Godavari River, four-fifths of the households worked as washers due to the village's location next to a water source with the desired high alkalinity. A 1692 Dutch VOC record that lists the names of washers working in Gondawaram suggests that many of the washers had relocated from villages throughout the Krishna and Godavari River area to work in the Dutch textile operations.[64]

Other instances of mobility reveal competition between the European mercantile operations further south along the Coromandel Coast. In 1626, the English tired of Dutch competition in the South Indian coastal city of Pulicat and established a fort and factory at Armagaon, twelve leagues from Pulicat.[65] This move drew migratory weavers and painters, which angered the Dutch VOC. Knowing that the artisans were traveling away from Pulicat, the Dutch, in the words of an East India Company factor, "beset the highways and passages into this man's country, and who they meet withal that names but Armagaon, that he is going thither, especially painters and weavers, those they torture and abuse at their pleasure."[66] Despite these impediments, the English recorded that "merchants, painters, and weavers flock daily more and more" to this region "where all the prime paintings in this country be made."[67] Even with this outpost in southern India, the EIC officials continued to write to their counterparts in the northern Coromandel sites of Petaboli and Machilipatnam requesting "paintings" and "chitte," although the merchants understood that these fine works were "scarce."[68]

Company officials seem to have felt victimized by the leverage that textile makers had. One way the painters bargained for power was by refusing to undertake orders on short notice or without a monetary advance. One official wrote that "if wee bespeake any sorts of paintings . . . it is necessarie wee give monies in hand; and under four or five months time no man will undertake to deliver a bale."[69] Officials in Fort St. George (Madras) were even more pessimistic: "For a cargazoon of cloth, espetially [*sic*] paintings, are not procurable under 9 or 10 months time. Wee know to our harts greife how you have suffered by trusting pore painters and weavours. But experience tells us it cannot be altogether avoyded."[70] Indeed, company officials were instructed that painters and weavers "shold [*sic*] be encouraged by a good treatment of them," avoiding any unnecessary costs that would make the artisans "sett a higher value upon their worke and cloth."[71]

In November 1662, Shem Bridges, an EIC official stationed at Madras, wrote with anxiety to the factory at Machilipatnam of his difficulties in dealing with painters in the British factory of Fort St. George: "Wee have had some (and noe small) trouble with our turbulent painters, whoe have bin in a greate uproar, and all to bring in a Chiefe Painter (Colleastre [Kālāstri] by name) which they formerly turned out. But with menaces and strict watch over them we have at present quelled them."[72] The artists demonstrate activism in this account: they "turned out" their chief painter, only to decide that they wanted him to return. Their "uproar" also caused a chief painter's identity to surface in

FIG. 4.9 Hanging. Coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1640–50. 101 15/16 in. (259 cm) × 59 13/16 in. (152 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 687–1898.

FIG. 4.10 Kalamkari hanging with figures in an architectural setting. Coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1640–50. 100 in. (254 cm) × 78 in. (198.1 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Mrs. Albert Blum, 1920 (20.79).

the historical record. This painter's name is given as "Colleastre," which Foster phonetically corrects as "Kālāstri." Embedded in what became a regular complaint about artisan unrest is unique documentation of the identity of a chief painter, whose name also reveals his place of birth. In contemporary India, Sri Kalahasti (also known as Kālāstri) is unique as a continuing center of hand-painted kalamkari production. The town is home to the Sri Kalahasti Temple, a site of Shaivite pilgrimage and worship. The chief painter Kālāstri was perhaps trained to make kalamkari temple hangings, an aesthetic he may have transferred to coastal Madras when he came for employment in the East India Company workshops.

When painters like Kālāstri moved due to conflict, exclusive patronage, or economic opportunity, they brought with them their knowledge of immobile objects. Seventeenth-century painted textiles offer subtle clues about the visual culture of the artisan's world that are usually overshadowed by the overt ornament on the cloths they produced. Reading the cloths through both surface pattern and the material qualities of their production, therefore, allows us to recognize on kalamkari textiles an imprint of the mobility that characterized the seventeenth-century Deccan.

A large textile hanging in the Victoria and Albert Museum contains a microcosm of these artisans' movements (fig. 4.9). This textile is notable for its figures in Persianate dress and also for its inclusion of pale pink, rose, and sky-blue hues. Overall fading has led to the mellowing of what were likely brighter red tones used in the background behind the large-scale figures in many of the cartouches. This brighter red color can be seen in a hanging in the Metropolitan Museum of Art that is closely related in style to the Victoria and Albert Museum textile (fig. 4.10). While changes on textiles are often attributed to shifts in consumer desire, Jasleen Dhamija has suggested that immigrant Persian dyers may have introduced the more pastel shades.[73] Pink colors—ranging from deep salmon to nearly off-white—can be found on Persian silk textiles from the same period, where this spectrum was often achieved using a fleeting dye made from safflower petals.[74] There is plentiful evidence to support the arrival of Persian artisans in Hindustan. Starting in the sixteenth century, Emperor Akbar boasted that textile artisans from Iran had traveled to the Mughal Empire to ply their trades.[75] ʿAbd al-Rahim had in his employ two Persian artists who were renowned for their skill in "making strange and wonderful inventions, and achieved much success in making designs for chintz."[76] Deccani carpets similarly suggest that Persian carpet weavers brought their skills to Golconda

in the seventeenth century.[77] These Persian artisans may have contributed to the crafting of kalamkari, with dyers in the regions surrounding Machilipatnam emulating in their textiles the taste for more pastel pink and blue colors.

The wax-resist patterning on the cloth, by contrast, may have resulted from artisans fleeing famine in Gujarat. In the 1630s, regions throughout South Asia were devastated by famine, a catastrophe with particularly tragic consequences for artisans in the textile trade who did not till their own fields and lacked surplus food supplies. The famines of the 1630s were especially severe in Gujarat and the western Deccan; company officials noted that the weavers, washers, and dyers who had not perished "are disperst into forraigne parts of greater plentie."[78]

The famines led Gujarati artisans to migrate to regions throughout Hindustan, possibly including areas around Machilipatnam.[79] As with the Coromandel Coast, Gujarat had been renowned for its brightly colored cotton textiles that were both painted and printed with floral, geometric, and figural designs (fig. 4.11a).[80] In style, the figures and colors of the Gujarati textiles are very distinct from the Deccani cotton paintings. Though they twist and bend with dynamism, large female figures on some of the best-preserved Gujarati textiles are more stylized and closely resemble Jain manuscript painting from the same period.[81] While the Deccani cotton paintings include a range of purples, pinks, and blues, the colors on the Gujarati textiles are confined to a rich, nearly black-hued blue, red, and white. The Coromandel Coast cotton paintings have curving, naturalistic swathes of flowers and vines as patterning, while the Gujarati patterning features a range of squares, dots, and diamonds that, even if they were painted with a *qalam* pen, more closely resemble the geometric shapes found on a block-printed textile.

These distinctions would seem to suggest that Gujarati block-printers and painters did not continue their craft if and when they migrated to the Coromandel Coast. However, more subtle details do propose a few ways in which Gujarati techniques may have entered into the visual vocabulary of the Coromandel Coast cotton painters. One of the most distinctive features of the Gujarati painted cotton textiles is the use of a resist—

FIG. 4.11A Ceremonial banner. Gujarat, traded to Sulawesi, eastern Indonesia. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, late fifteenth or early sixteenth century. 209 1/16 in. (531 cm) × 39 in. (99 cm). TAPI Collection, Surat, 01.28.

FIG. 4.11B Detail.

FIG. 4.12 Detail of fig. 4.9.

a wax or mud substance that protects the white cloth from absorbing the dye color, resulting in fine white lines and patterns that make a striking contrast against the concentrated blue and red colors of the textiles (fig. 4.11b). While resist-dyeing was a feature of Indian textiles from a very early date, Gujarati artists excelled at it; some of the earliest Indian textiles are block-printed cloths sent to Egypt from Gujarat that have been patterned with white resists against red and dark blue indigo grounds.[82] Even more impressive is how in the few instances of hand-painted cotton cloths from Gujarat, the artists have filled in the space inside these white-resist lines with a darker, sometimes deep blue or almost black color. This technique of surrounding a dark color with a light resist was adopted within the large-scale, Coromandel Coast textile where it was similarly used in the background of the figural scenes (fig. 4.12). The combination of white outline and the intense color of the filling makes the dark shapes appear jewel-like, as they seem to float in the lightened space of the resist lines. Although this effect is mainly used in the background patterning, it creates a sense of depth and movement.

While artisans brought with them skills and tastes, they also transferred visual content that had been painted onto immobile architecture. One of the closest visual parallels for extant figural kalamkari textiles is southern Indian temple wall paintings.[83] For example, a sixteenth-century temple complex in Lepakshi in inland Andhra Pradesh contains well-preserved figural paintings that have frequently been connected to kalamkari paintings (figs. 4.13 and 4.14). The paintings at the Virabhadra Temple in Lepakshi are almost exclusively reserved for the ceilings of the temple *mandapa*, or pillared hall. There, women in patterned lower garments sway, their hands extended in front of them. The Lepakshi murals bear imagery of hunters in feathered skirts that resembles what is found on the Brooklyn Museum's monumental hangings with which this book began.[84] On the beams between the plastered ceiling panels the artists have painted non-figural patterns taken from textiles from southeastern India. One must look up to catch the checkered blue and white pattern on a lowered beam or a floral arabesque that separates the tiers of figural imagery. The edges of the ceiling paintings are given a waving line, suggestive of a lightweight cloth stretching and fluttering against its nail supports. The paintings do not merely suggest cloth patterns but rather embody them for the viewer, alerting us to the uses of the more fragile cloths with narrative scenes that may have once been tacked to ceilings. Whether the Lepakshi scenes are directly related to any kalamkaris, the prevalence of textile patterning at this temple suggests that the painters who created these murals had an awareness of, if not an expertise in, painting cloth.[85] Given that artisans traveled, as the story of the Madras chief painter from the temple town of Kālāstri shows, they may have brought with them to coastal sites of production the visual memory of painted ceilings.

FIG. 4.13 Painted ceiling, *mandapa* of Virabhadra Temple, Lepakshi, Andhra Pradesh. Sixteenth century.

FIG. 4.14 Painted ceiling, *mandapa* of Virabhadra Temple, Lepakshi, Andhra Pradesh. Sixteenth century.

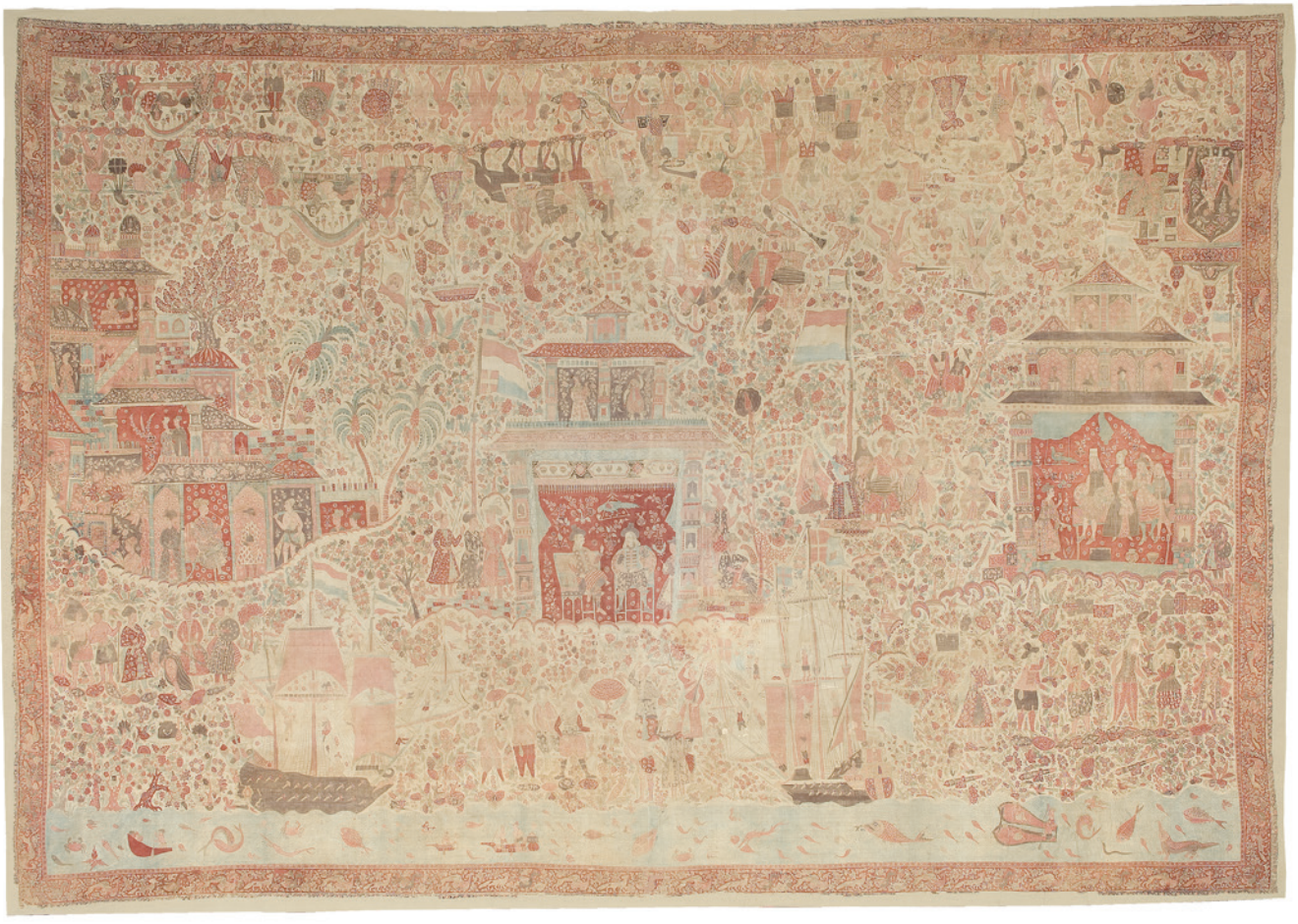
FIG. 4.15A Hanging. Coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1650. 107⅞ in. (274 cm) × 76⅜ in. (194 cm). Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, 12132.

FIG. 4.15B Detail.

FIG. 4.15C Detail.

Vying to Patronize Painted Cloths

Two European ships with slender hulls and tall masts bob along a waving line of indigo-blue shore in the foreground of a painted cotton cloth likely made further south along the coast from Machilipatnam (fig. 4.15a). On land behind, European figures wearing patterned pantaloons doff their hats and shake hands, concluding what Ebeltje Hartkamp-Jonxis has proposed might be a trade agreement from 1654 between the Netherlands and Denmark at the port of Tranquebar (in present-day Tamil Nadu).[86] While the tall ships with their identifying flags may occupy the foreground, they represent only a portion of the painted cloth and, by extension, they are only part of the story of the scene (fig. 4.15b). The textile's artist has densely filled the space with elements common to mid-seventeenth-century kalamkari: garlands of flowers, arching palm trees, and scenes of musicians, lovers, and friends conducting their everyday business (fig. 4.15c). The eye must travel from the relative sparseness of the foreground, with its imagery of the sea, into the thicket of the country landscape. Trade in the Coromandel Coast textiles operated in a similar way; the commerce in painted cotton cloths, particularly fine



figural cloths like these, could never be fully conducted from the shores of the port city. Someone, usually a hired agent accompanied by a translator, would need to travel to the villages where textiles were actually made. In this way, whether they represent an actual historical incident or a general pattern of meeting, the paintings on the textile constitute a rare metanarrative of the seventeenth-century maritime trade in kalamkari and depict the interlacing of local sites and distant markets that characterized the worlds brought together by kalamkari cloth.

A wide variety of patrons contracted with artisans to paint cloths. Among this diverse group, visual styles and conceptions of design were radically different. In the primary emporium of Machilipatnam, agents for the Mughal emperor such as Mirza Sadeq Qazvini ordered cloths beside French, English, Dutch, Portuguese, Persian, Armenian, Arab, and scores of local and regional merchants who carried out the business of trade with the spice markets of Southeast Asia and the consumers of the Persian Gulf.[87] The king of Siam sent his own merchants to the Coromandel Coast to directly deliver his specifically royal designs, as did the king of Bantam.[88] The rulers of the Rajput principality of Amber, discussed in chapter 3, likely procured textiles through intermediaries in Machilipatnam. These merchants and their deputies, translators, and local contacts fanned out into the villages along the Krishna and Godavari deltas to commission, supervise, and collect painted cloths. The geographic dispersal of cloth production, the time-consuming nature of the work, and the distance between Machilipatnam and the ultimate consumers of the cloth meant that designs were translated, revised, and improvised in a period that could last nearly two years.

While the volume of British and Dutch records from the seventeenth century may create an impression that Europeans controlled trade, their organization of the industry did not exhaust its productive capacity.[89] In the latter half of the seventeenth century, Europeans gained control only over shipping between Machilipatnam and Southeast Asia, the Persian Gulf, and the Middle East. Merchants of non-European origin could still purchase freight space on European ships.[90] Even when Europeans came to hold a substantial market share of the overall textile trade, the specialized trade in the kinds of painted cotton textiles illustrated here continued to be a site of diversity, complexity, and, at times, resistance to European attempts at hegemony. Even at its peak in the 1680s, the market for painted cloth from the Coromandel Coast was never centralized and control over it was always shared, however irritably, by a panoply of actors.

Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah (r. 1626–72), the long-reigning ruler of Golconda, for instance, pushed back against foreign intervention and claimed monopolies over the cloth painters' work. In 1646, English East India Company officials complained that "the King of Golconda (whose country it is) . . . took so great affection unto fine paintings" that he commanded "that the painters should work only for them."[91] As late as 1675, when the English heard that the sultan was coming to Machilipatnam, they hid their export goods in a hole dug in the courtyard of their factory to prevent him from seizing them.[92]

The more direct competition was an immigrant from Iran named Mir Muhammad Saʿid Ardastani (1591–1663), who, in the role of the sultan's chief minister, received the title of Mir Jumla.[93] Muhammad Saʿid had first come to prominence in 1636 as the

governor, or *havāldār*, of Machilipatnam. The governor of Machilipatnam kept strict watch over the cloth trade because, if accounts from later in the century are any indication, he himself was required to pay most of his taxes to the sultan of Golconda in the form of Machilipatnam textiles.[94] Throughout the 1630s, Muhammad Saʿid also worked to increase the trade to the Persian Gulf. By 1641, Muhammad Saʿid's own ship carried "800 packs of textiles, 500 packs of Bengal sugar, and 400 packs of north Coromandel indigo among other goods."[95] The English wrote worriedly in 1651 that all of Golconda was "governed by him," that Muhammad Saʿid had in his possession four thousand horses, three hundred elephants, hundreds of camels, and ten thousand oxen that transported his goods to Golconda and Bijapur and "into diverse parts of the Great Moguls country." Just as intimidating were his ten ships for "foreign navigation" to Southeast Asia, as well as Iran, Bengal, Mocha, Peruk, the Maldives, and Macassar.[96] In 1651, Muhammad Saʿid sought to establish a monopoly over the entire cloth market, alarming the British, who wrote that he would allow "not . . . a piece to be sold but by his own ministers."[97]

While such a monopoly never transpired, the likelihood was that the finest kalamkari cloths were commissioned and retained by merchants and agents working for South Asian courts. The *waqāʾiʿ*, or news reports, sent from the Deccan to the Mughal emperor to keep track of happenings throughout the empire suggest that the sultan of Golconda used kalamkari as a valued material for courtly gifts. In August 1661, Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah sent twenty-five rolls of kalamkari cloth (written in the *waqāʾiʿ* as *pārcha qalamkārī*) and a letter to Sayyid Iliyas, a servant of the Bijapur ruler ʿAli ʿAdil Shah II (r. 1656–72).[98] On the same day, he also sent two trays of fruit to the *wakīl* of the Shah of Iran. In turn, Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah received gifts of cloth from Suri Rao, by then the governor of Machilipatnam. In May 1662, Suri Rao sent the sultan a kalamkari canopy (*shāmyāna qalamkārī*) and its cloth screens (*qanāt*), as well as a small tent. He sent these items via Mulla Muhammad ʿAli to be presented to the sultan.[99] In the *waqāʾiʿ*, besides Machilipatnam cloth, only Gujarati cloth is mentioned by name; all other robes and textiles are left generic. Less auspicious events give a sense for how the valuable Machilipatnam cloth moved through space. The Mughal reports include a robbery: one Isar Das, who was a merchant of Burhanpur, was transporting cloth (*pārcha*) from Machilipatnam for Ihtimam Khan, the *qalʿadār* of Udgir. On his way to Hyderabad, thieves murdered one member of his party and carried off two bales of cloth. The fact that a high-ranking official of Golconda then promised restitution for the stolen bales of cloth, and that the Mughal reports noted this, suggests the value that Machilipatnam cotton cloth held along the trade routes of the Deccan.[100] At other points, the *waqāʾiʿ* also mention gifts of cloth that accompanied trays of fruit and inform the emperor of the mango harvests for a given year, further underscoring the fact that textiles were arriving fresh for their recipients, moving through these regional pathways in a manner akin to perishable foods.[101]

Machilipatnam at 1675: The Diary of William Puckle The diary of William Puckle, the chief officer of the English East India Company's factory in Machilipatnam (written by Puckle as "Metchlepatam"), captures the English side of the fluctuating

relationships between local merchants and the East India Company and the sensitive negotiations of protocol that were necessitated by the trade in cloth.[102] In late July 1675, Puckle writes that he and his agents met in Machilipatnam with Telugu-speaking merchants, who would ultimately draw up contracts with the artisans to produce cloth.[103] The merchants refused to "undertake for half the investment," which likely meant that they would not cover their half of the advance to be given to the artisans that the East India Company desired them to pay. The company would have to pay more. On a second day of negotiations, the merchants were given a list of the cloths desired, four parts of which they accepted and one of which they "left to their consideration . . . till tomorrow." On July 30, the merchants "send word they cannot come till evening (it seems they are told the hours of the day are unlucky to bargain in therefore do forbear)."[104] By that evening, the merchants returned and agreed to "undertake" an immense volume of production that totaled 72,500 individual pieces of cloth.

Once the contracts were drawn up, a series of steps occurred. First, the woven cloth, known as "brown cloth," came to English factories from weavers unbleached and had to be sent away again to bleachers. The bleachers determined the size and scale of the loads that they could manage. After the bleaching, cloths were distributed to painters and dyers. In December, the cloth orders started coming back in and merchants at the factories were charged with the task of sorting, a subject of great anxiety that Puckle scrambled to find enough company officials to complete during the Christmas holidays in 1675. The intermediaries and then the artisans would thereafter finally be paid the full sum and the cloths would be loaded onto ships to travel to their ultimate destination.

On one occasion, the governor (*havāldār*) of Machilipatnam (who held the revenue rights over the port, an honor given by the sultan of Golconda) invited company officials to his residence where they encountered fourteen of Machilipatnam's other chief merchants, both Telugu-speaking and Persian-speaking, smoking the "hubble bubbles." Puckle was candid about the awkwardness of his officials: "We presently (shifting foot) went on the carpet and sat down next to him by our Bramini [secretary]." The purpose was to discuss the grievances of the English, whose supply of silver had been stopped on the road by the *havāldār*'s forces. The English were asked to sit on the carpet, while the governor whispered in Persian to the other merchants. The company officials "commanded he speak so loud all might hear, there being silence something was understood of our grievance by the Moores."[105] This scene, an unusually vivid description of the English discomfort with cross-cultural etiquette, suggests the negotiated power and partial control that the English EIC had in the protocols of trade.

Puckle also captures the relative privileges afforded to the Persian, or Persian-speaking, merchants who were working in Machilipatnam. We hear about the "Moore" merchants, who, in October, were the only people allowed to buy bread in Machilipatnam.[106] French records from the same year of 1675 reveal the great clout held by non-European merchant communities. In retribution for a French standoff with the Golconda government over the destruction of the French factory in Machilipatnam, the governor blockaded the port. While the English, Dutch, and French protested vociferously at the loss of trade, it was only when the other merchant communities—Hindu, Muslim, Armenian, and Chinese—threatened to leave that the governor relented.[107]

The company had in its employ an accountant, a "Gentu Writer" named Anco Bramini, who was paid four pagodas a month; an interpreter of the "Moors, Gentu and Portuguese languages" named Anchotatroa Dubash, paid two pagodas a month; a "mulla," or writer of Persian; and an "accountant and Gentu Writer" named Pingraza Bramini, who was paid one pagoda a month.[108] This brigade of braminis, mullahs, and dubashes, in addition to the local merchants, remained the company's go-betweens. The English tried to circumvent the merchant class and work directly with artisans. Toward the end of his yearlong tenure, Puckle noted that more of the EIC staff should learn Persian and Portuguese and that the company should hire a tutor for six months for that purpose. Dutch officials in Machilipatnam and Hyderabad had more training in Persian, a fact that gave them an advantage in the trade.[109] Puckle's chief complaint, which is revealing for the company's dependency on local, Telugu-speaking merchants, was that none of the officers proficiently spoke the "countrey language" of the inland cloth-producing villages. Puckle lamented that "there is but one or two of the young men understand the countrey languages onely among them they have Dutch and a little Portuguese they have been called upon to study or learne, but Idleness undoes."[110] Puckle's concern with language and translation had a visual dimension when patrons commissioned patterns for painted cloths. The costliness of dyes and the price of the painter's labor meant that for large orders, merchants had to pay an advance on the textiles before production and thus had the opportunity to specify their desired color palette and designs. In the process of commissioning cloth, translation was needed for both verbal and visual communication.

The Circulation of Patterns While no surviving patterns from southeastern India exist from the seventeenth century, John Irwin has suggested that Europeans brought paper pattern books for artisans to copy.[111] Physical patterns, or "musters," as they were known in the English context, were in the possession of the East India Company. The diary of William Puckle includes a "press for musters" in the inventory of the EIC factory in Machilipatnam.[112] The form of these patterns is unknown. In the case of South Asian manuscript paintings, designs were sometimes transferred to a cloth using charcoal dust sprinkled from a paper stencil pricked with holes, thus creating an identical design below.[113] When the Dutch VOC official Daniel Havart described the process that painters used to draw the flowers and figures on a kalamkari cloth in the village of Palakollu, he wrote that the "master [painters] painted from the samples, which they had laid beside them."[114] He cast the artisans' use of samples as resulting from a lack of creativity, writing of the painters, "they cannot imagine anything by themselves, but can only imitate something so that it has a complete likeness."[115]

Havart's account suggests a total reliance by painters on a pattern, which was highly unlikely. Seventeenth-century accounts of cloth-painting mention a preliminary charcoal sketch and that this task was delegated to the most skillful painter. In contemporary practices, the charcoal drawing is completed freehand by the head of the workshop in a manner that suggests not the stenciling of a pattern but the repetition of well-known, stylized forms.

When we consider a pattern in the context of painted cloths, particularly those that feature very fine figural and floral painting, it may sometimes be helpful to think of the painter as having a repertoire of stylized forms or previous sketches rather than a paper stencil or book of printed designs.

The small-scale *rūmāl* textiles discussed in chapter 3 share repeated figural forms, suggesting the use of a template or vocabulary of known motifs.[116] These motifs may have been copied from extant paintings. Given the similarities that the figural and floral features on these textiles share with manuscript paintings, J. P. Losty has suggested that Golconda's "court art design . . . was transmitted to the painters of the Coromandel textiles in the first half of the seventeenth century."[117] Losty proposes that the figures and flowers traveled as patterns or exemplars from the small-scale manuscript paintings to the *rūmāl* textiles. Whether their origins lay in paintings or in the skillful work of cloth-painters, once applied to the textiles, the stock figures on the *rūmāl*s created vignettes that have independent meaning. On the *rūmāl*s, the repeated figures include a seated nobleman and his courtesan, a bearded man with a bird on his arm, and a tall man with curling forelocks. The repetitions show how slight variations in the placement of figures can produce very different connotations. In one *rūmāl*, for example, the artist has intertwined the body of a standing male figure with that of a shorter man; their robes overlap and bodies press close together and the taller man caresses his lover's face. On another *rūmāl*, the taller figure is repeated, but this time in the guise of a servant. He has the same inclined posture, but now it is in order to serve water from a jug he holds in his arms (figs. 4.16 and 4.17). Variations on a pattern could imply romantic relationships or ones of deferential remove. Far from creating monotony, these repetitions could change the tenor of a cloth.

FIG. 4.16 Detail of fig. 3.8.

FIG. 4.17 Detail of fig. 3.12.

For the floral textiles that comprised the majority of painted cotton cloths by the end of the seventeenth century, it is even less clear what form patterns may have taken. In contrast to the naturalistic floral imagery on carpets, like those made for the Amber court, the flowering plants that appeared on painted cotton textiles often combined real flowers with imaginary, embellished blooms (see fig. 4.1). The leaves on the plants were juicy and snake-like, with serrated edges and sharp-tipped spines. The inherently loose, creative allowances of this floral imagery, and its asymmetry, counteract the idea that the textile artisans of the Coromandel Coast were merely copyists. Later in the seventeenth century, English East India Company officials wrote to agents commissioning the cloths, "Let them use their own fancies in those works and colors which they can best perform, for it is not material what the fancies or works the Patterns are, so [long as they] be finely done and [in]

lively colors."[118] As evidence that kalamkari makers were among the most capable artists in their rendering of flowers, recent research has shown that textile painters were hired by French and English officials in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to illustrate flowering plants in large-scale studies of natural history.[119]

A few rare textiles from the early to mid-seventeenth century also suggest that textile painters making cloths for regional patrons and European export shared a pattern repertoire. A unique, white-ground kalamkari bedcover that was embellished with the Royal Stuart coat of arms can be dated to the reign of either Charles I (1625–49) or Charles II (1660–85) (fig. 4.18).[120] The artists likely copied a muster or pattern to create the central medallion with the coat of arms. However, the majority of the textile is painted with a densely packed pattern of animals, including elephants, birds, and Chinese mythological beasts. Between the animals, blooming lotus flowers give way to sprays of flowers and miniature tree trunks. With its compressed pattern and the tapered tips of the floral forms, as well as the frequent use of wax-resist details in the red flowers, this textile resembles the iconography and arrangements of motifs found on mid-seventeenth-century kalamkari textiles made for the Amber court and other South Asian consumers (fig. 4.19). John Irwin rightly notes the "coarse" nature of the drawing on the example made for the British, and the more limited spectrum of colors, and he suggests that the cloth would not have been made by the artists of the finest workshops around Machilipatnam.[121] Yet the shared imagery and style of painting provide a rare visual suggestion of overlapping artisanship and evidence for an exchange of visual patterns between painters making cloths for European and South Asian customers in the

FIG. 4.18 Cover (detail). Coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1625–85. 38 9/16 in. (98 cm) × 83 7/16 in. (212 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Given by Mrs. E. A. Mauns, IS.21–1956.

FIG. 4.19 Court hanging or floor-spread (known as "The Reynolds coverlet") (detail). Coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted and block printed, mordant and resist dyed, ca. 1625–50. 106 in. (269.2 cm) × 89 in. (226.1 cm), RISD Museum, Providence, RI, Gift of the Glocester Heritage Society, 83.023.

seventeenth century, linking together what have historically been studied as separate histories of patronage and production.

Urbanism and the Visual Culture of the City of Hyderabad Kalamkari cloths made in the vicinity of Machilipatnam were at once rooted and mobile objects. The very specific production conditions needed to make these cloths meant that their patrons were required to acquire them from a specific location. The importance of this region around Machilipatnam—its water, dyes, sunshine, and artistic talent—surfaces again and again in the accounts of these cloths, in their processes of making, in the travels and fixedness of the artisans who crafted them. The final section of this chapter examines the visual scenes on a small number of figural kalamkari textiles that oscillate between being markers of real, thriving locales and idealized and laudatory images. These works have been dismissed as objects whose "pictorial themes" are "subordinate elements in designs conceived purely decoratively."[122] Yet these figural kalamkari cloths, which are typically dated to ca. 1640–50, gesture toward the particularities of urban life in southeastern India and reflect the literary conventions of the day. Through telling details on the cloths, the artists made jokes, presented social commentary, and depicted scenes of everyday life in an urban, mercantile culture. As Marika Sardar first suggested, the scenes on the textiles echo both the imagery of manuscript paintings and the historical wall paintings and architecture of the sultanate of Golconda.[123] From this, it may even be possible to think of the painted cloths as idealized portraits of the cities of the northern Coromandel Coast. Machilipatnam, though chiefly a merchant town, boasted a large, diverse population and tall buildings made of wood and plaster. But it was Hyderabad, the metropolis inland from Machilipatnam, that a French visitor wrote "seems to be the center of all trade in the East."[124]

The large-scale painted cotton cloth that is held in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the paired hanging in the Metropolitan Museum of Art depict scenes of men and women standing in windows, some silently alone while others are entwined in amorous embraces (see figs. 4.9 and 4.10). The painters and dyers of these cotton cloths have rendered the nearly life-sized figures corporeally present; the men and women hover just at the edge of the picture plane. Their skin is depicted in subtle dyes that saturate the soft, finely woven cotton, giving it a fleshy texture. We can even sense the textile layer that the people are wearing. In figure 4.10, the woman holding a child wears a translucent cotton textile whose presence is marked by a pattern of resist dyed, white stars.

In addition to their large, embodied figures, the textiles depict smaller images of a world of combination, trade, and transitory visitors. The upper registers and side compartments of these textiles capture the liveliness of the caravanserai, the large guesthouses where travelers lodged throughout the prosperous sultanate of Golconda. These hangings depict a world peopled as much by men and women as by things. The imports on display—the Chinese vases, Venetian glass, and Dutch hats—make these painted textiles into a record of a particular moment in trade in the middle of the seventeenth century, when commerce at Machilipatnam and Hyderabad flourished. Chinese porcelain

objects were popular among Persian consumers in Petaboli and Machilipatnam.[125] The sister of Golconda's Sultan Ibrahim Shah endowed a collection of Chinese porcelain to a Sufi saint's tomb in Iran.[126]

The figures on these textiles are marked by the strong affinity with Persian art and culture seen in the sultanate's manuscript paintings. On the broadest level, the likeness between objects produced for the Golconda court and for the elite of Safavid Isfahan is indicative of a close connection between the Golconda sultanate and the Safavid Empire. In defiance of the Mughal court, the sultans of Golconda professed an affinity to the Shiʿa rulers of the Safavid dynasty and modeled many aspects of Hyderabad after the example of Isfahan, while also drawing from earlier Deccani cities such as Warangal. As they built the new city of Hyderabad in the late sixteenth century near the historic Golconda Fort, the rulers styled their court, their hospitals, their *ʿashūrkhāna*s (Muharram mourning halls), and their religious life on Safavid models.[127] The transfer of aesthetics also occurred because of the transregional networks forged by the migration to Golconda of Iranian merchants, soldiers, and ministers, as well as artisans and traders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[128] The figures on the large-scale textiles have been drawn with fine lines like the youthful men and women in Persian art from this period. They have draping robes, smooth faces, placid expressions, and swaying postures.

In addition to absorbing elements of Persianate visual culture, these cloths distributed to the Safavid Empire the distinctive cultural formations of seventeenth-century Golconda.[129] As an estimation of the overland trade between India and Iran, in 1644, nearly 6,000 camels carrying Indian cotton textiles arrived in Isfahan in a period of eight months. In 1660, the Dutch East India Company unloaded 80,000 pieces of South Asian cloth at the Persian port of Bandar Abbas.[130] In Tavernier's words, the sultan of Golconda's ships traveling to Persia were "laden with *chites* or coloured calicoes, the flowered decoration of which is all done by hand."[131] In the Safavid capital of Isfahan, the painted walls of the Chehel Soutun share certain particular compositional features with the figural painted cloths of the Coromandel Coast.[132] On one arched niche, an artist has painted a *satī* scene, an image of a Hindu woman before her self-immolation. Most tantalizing is the deep red background of the more decorative painted sections, which Eleanor Sims attributes to an "imitation of Mughal textiles."[133] In their use of decorative backgrounds and architectural niches, the wall paintings of Isfahan and the Deccani kalamkari cloth hangings share a vocabulary that mixes pattern with figural imagery, that separates spaces through framing, that miniaturizes and enlarges the figures depending on spatial considerations, and that is heterogeneous in its choice of subject matter, style of rendering, and the content of its figural imagery.

The textiles themselves rendered architectural wonders to be admired. Poets and travelers of the seventeenth century praised the heights of multistoried buildings in Hyderabad. In 1641, the poet Ulfati Sawaji described the grand palace of Hyderabad as being so tall that it seemed to converse with the sky.[134] Whereas the structures built by Europeans within the Golconda sultanate were either single-storied or double-storied, the palaces of Hyderabad were famous for having five to eight stories. The French traveler Jean de Thévenot described the buildings at the center of Hyderabad as having

"many windows towards the palace, with an open gallery to see the shews."[135] Another observer wrote that Hyderabad consisted of buildings "adorned with porticoes, halls and galleries."[136] Jean-Baptiste Tavernier compared the palace of the queen Hayat Bakshi Begum to the Palais Royal of Paris and described "a large square, upon which stands one of the walls of the palaces, in the middle of which is a balcony where the King seats himself when he wishes to give audience to the people."[137]

These descriptions emphasize the openness of the architecture and the visibility and participation of the sultan of Golconda in the urban life of Hyderabad. Sussan Babaie has argued that in seventeenth-century Isfahan, the Safavid court developed palace types that encouraged visibility and hospitality. She writes that the "architectural disposition of the palaces" enabled large-scale feasting and festivals, which contributed to a sense of "conviviality" in the Safavid capital.[138] This sense of conviviality was political in its origins and grew out of the particular moment in Safavid political history that expanded the access and openness of palaces in order to heighten the participation of the ruler in public spectacles.[139] The central visual feature of this convivial architecture was the open space of the *tālār*, the pillared porches, which, Babaie writes, "transform . . . ceremonial performances into fully public spectacles."[140]

The scenes on the large-scale Golconda textiles engage in this urban openness. The compositional arrangement of the figures into separate compartments may have further diverse origins. These compartmentalized scenes are found in Rajput painting, where, as Molly Aitken has shown, small pockets of space can serve as a device to suggest separation and longing, or can serve to divide a narrative into separate scenes.[141] More closely related seem to be the manuscript paintings of Golconda, where scenes of multitiered palaces could be found in sixteenth-century works. The "Hyderabad painter," working at the court of Golconda sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, similarly rendered framed scenes of multiscaled figures into a single page (fig. 4.20).[142] These works suggest simultaneous action. If there is a European connection for the images, a source may be Dutch emblematic prints showing scenes of domesticity. As Simon Schama has written of the moralizing visibility of the Dutch interior in the seventeenth century, the Dutch "made sure that the taste for comfort (the famed *gezelligheid*) not luxury could be inspected through open doors or, more likely, the broad-glazed frontage of their homes."[143] The textiles expose private practices to be "inspected through open doors" in what was an imagined level of visibility.

In the account of Nizamuddin Ahmad, who told of Shah Jahan's patronage of Machilipatnam cloth, we also witness the preparations for a festival scene in Hyderabad that rivaled those of Isfahan.[144] The text describes the festival for the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, celebrated in the Shiʿa kingdom of Golconda on the seventeenth day of the month of Rabiʿ al-Awwal.[145] Nizamuddin Ahmad describes enormous tents, which he reports are called *mandapa*, that were erected in the main square of Hyderabad. The *mandapa*s are decorated from floor to ceiling with velvet fabric, golden embroideries (*zardozī*), and *atlas*, or satin. In front of the palace, which is said to be as big as a mountain, there hung a monumental curtain (*parda*) the color of the sky. Designers and artists came to arrange the spectacle and make it beautiful. The day of the festival brought

FIG. 4.20 A Prince Enthroned. Attributed to the "Hyderabad painter," Golconda. *Kuliyat-e-Sultan Quli Qutb Shah*, 12a. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, ca. 1590–1600. 10⅞ in. (27.7 cm) × 5 11/16 in. (14.5 cm) (folio). The Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, Deccan Poetry Ms. No. 153.

dancing, singing, musical instruments, and musicians. Here, Nizamuddin Ahmad begins to use the language of wonders. As a viewer it is as though one is looking at heaven to see these arrangements; one needs "a thousand eyes" (*hazār chashm*) to view the festival; it resembles the one hundred thousand images in the *nigār khāna-yi chīn*, the fabled "picture gallery of China," a common phrase to describe how an image is wondrous, all-encompassing, and defies description.[146] In the following sentences, he describes the paintings that adorn the walls of the palaces of Hyderabad, including images from Persian romances and scenes of hunting; paintings of the sultan and his prime ministers; and likenesses of the kings of Hindustan and rulers all over the world in their own apparel (*libās*). The chronicle states that people do not need to travel to see beautiful places because it all exists right there.[147] In the central public square of Hyderabad, Nizamuddin Ahmad has conjured a scene swathed in textiles and teeming with life that calls to mind the imagery on the kalamkari cloth.

The textile hangings also assert the heterogeneity of the sultanate of Golconda.[148] Far from a peripheral outpost, the city depicted in these textiles appears to be a dense cultural center that was rich with imported imagery and indigenous practices. The city as an idealized realm of diverse peoples appeared in Deccani and Mughal literature of the period, as well as in the texts of the Amber rulers (see chapter 3).[149] Sunil Sharma cites the poet Vali, who praised the city of Surat in Gujarat not only for its mercantile activity but also for its cosmopolitan populace, which included "Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, and also Europeans, each contributing to the city's overall prosperity."[150]

The Victoria and Albert Museum textile, as well as the related Metropolitan Museum of Art hanging (see fig. 4.10), depicts city life in process but also scenes of suspended motion: a man tilting his head up to look at some unseen thing in wonder, trained birds poised on a finger, a dog with a bristling tail. The scenes are cross-sections of multistoried buildings. The images make public what would usually be private, but they also suggest an urban space in which people of different origins coexist. In the lower central scene, European men wear doublets with lace collars, colorfully patterned pantaloons, and silk stockings (fig. 4.21). One man has long mustaches that extend beyond his face. A hatless man sits on a European-style chair whose detailed, turned legs are painted in a combination of blue and pink. In the foreground is a dog with a twirled tail and lean body that resembles a European house dog; the horn-like toes on the backs of his legs, though, point to Chinese mythological beasts. The imagery of the figures is specific, detailed, and seemingly

FIG. 4.21 Hanging (detail of fig. 4.9).

FIG. 4.22 Hanging (detail of fig. 4.9).

FIG. 4.23 Woman under an arch. India or Iran. Silk velvet, silk pile and silver lamella spun around silk, first half of the seventeenth century. 56¼ in. (143 cm) × 27 in. (69 cm). The David Collection, Copenhagen, 37/1995.

deliberate. The European men are marked as such by their hair, their dress, their blue eyes, and their "lapdog," a regular feature of the erotic, satirical paintings of the *farangī-sāz* style pioneered by the Isfahan artist Riza-i ʿAbbasi and his followers, which depicted humorous scenes of *firangī*s, or European foreigners.[151]

The woman on the right-hand side of the Victoria and Albert Museum cloth heightens the complexity of the social commentary within the scene (fig. 4.22). She wears a voluminous striped gown that hangs loosely about her body, exposing her breast, which the painter has articulated with a modest but naturalistic line. She does not recline horizontally at the bottom of the page like the women in Safavid paintings but hangs back from the picture plane, attending to the standing man in the brown hat. The woman's physical exposure is likely not a European convention or an import from Safavid art but may instead be a trope from the region's temple painting. The murals of the Virabhadra temple complex in Lepakshi include women whose saris fall from their shoulders, revealing rounded breasts. Her solidity and monumentality also recall large silk hangings used in architectural spaces as door panels and curtains (fig. 4.23).

The artist, however, has done more to mark the specificity of this woman. At the curve of her belly, improbably enough, is a rooster, with its downy feathers and spiky cocked head. This insertion of a partially unclad woman with a rooster is uncommon, even unprecedented. The woman wears a necklace with a sunburst medallion, a sign associated with Zoroastrianism, which associates the rooster with prayer and the awakening of humankind to godly revelations.[152] The woman with her rooster may refer to the celebrations of Nauruz, the Zoroastrian New Year holiday when men would give sweet foods, new clothes, and sometimes roosters to their wives or mistresses.[153] The artist has placed this female figure in a different matrix of associations—she is both a Hindu dancing woman like those found in the murals of Lepakshi and a Parsi wife or mistress who cohabits with a European man.

On these textiles the separation of these figures into different compartments, itself a metaphor for isolation, actually simplifies the nature of urban life in mid-seventeenth-century Hyderabad. While English East India Company officials like William Puckle were restricted by their lack of linguistic skills from engaging in the social world of Machilipatnam, Dutch representatives of the VOC learned Persian, studied courtly etiquette, worked as translators for the sultan, and participated in festivals and city life in both Hyderabad and Machilipatnam. Daniel

Havart, a Dutch trader who arrived in Hyderabad in the early 1670s, followed the advice of the chief of the VOC factory and began to study Persian. With the help of his tutor, Shah Qasim, Havart and other VOC employees learned to speak Persian, craft letters, and read poetry.[154] Shah Qasim transcribed for Havart a number of Mughal *farmān*s, as well as the full text of Saʿdi's *Būstān*, a classic thirteenth-century work of Persian poetry whose title translates to the "fragrant herb garden."[155] Havart began translating Saʿdi's verses and completed his translation in 1679; he then published the work in Dutch in 1688 as *Den Persiaansen bogaard* (The Persian Orchard). Havart was a burgeoning linguist but also an impatient merchant, and in other texts he published (quoted earlier), he dismissed the textile artists working near Machilipatnam as mere copyists who painted exclusively from patterns. His derogatory words about artisans and local, Telugu-speaking merchants and scholars, alongside his appreciation for the Persian language and culture, were characteristic of broader Dutch prejudices and serve to caution against romanticizing the degree of cultural harmony in the Deccan.[156] Yet Havart's engagement with Persian literary culture also underscores that the textile trade worked to disseminate more than just material goods. Havart appended to his translation of the *Būstān* the following praise for Saʿdi: "Thus he feeds the Dutch people with his Orchard fruits; // His Rose Garden and Orchard are filled with wisdom and amusement."[157] The trade in cloth and spices, which brought figures like Havart to Hyderabad and Machilipatnam, also sent them home with the fruits and poetry of fragrant Persian gardens.

The textiles made in the northern Coromandel Coast are not merely decorative; they actively take social interactions as their subject matter. They are about open windows, floating music, about falconing and dance. They are about waiting for the season to change. While decorative ornament, in the form of hanging flower garlands and resist-dyed plants, is a dominant theme in these painted cloths, the ornament does not overwhelm the figures but jostles them into significance. The use of color gives body to the forms. The steady line that draws out faces also gives shape to the curve of a belly or the spiraling of the ear and the cleft of a chin. The rosewater sprinklers, porcelain vases, and bowls of fruit are both conventionalized decorations and the possessions of these city dwellers. The rendering of the architecture, while it is repetitious, with fancifully tipped-up rooftops and striated domes, gives three-dimensionality to the spaces that the figures occupy. The patron who commissioned the Victoria and Albert Museum textile will likely remain unknown; the textile was cut up and resewn over the centuries and does not bear inventory markings. Yet the ambiguity of its patronage speaks to the very particular conditions in which the object was made, for this is a textile in which a wide variety of merchants and elites in the mid-seventeenth century could see themselves and their experience of a place represented.

Coda: The Missing Artists of Machilipatnam When the Mughal siege devastated Golconda in the 1680s, Europeans abandoned their factories in Machilipatnam and Petaboli and took refuge in the southern states ruled by Marathas, Vijayanagara-descended *nayakas*, and a variety of local, Tamil-speaking rulers. One of the unintended but most significant effects of the late seventeenth-century warfare was that European

outposts dotting the southern Coromandel Coast became places of security for both artisans and merchants because trade could continue unabated in these fortified sites.[158]

In the 1690s, British officials in Madras sought to bring superior painters from the areas around Machilipatnam to the south. In 1694, an East India Company director in London instructed his Madras counterparts to "contrive to find out the place of [the Masulipatnam painters'] present residence and invite them to inhabit in our society of Madras, giving for their encouragement assurances of a constant employment."[159] These invitations were repeated, even though the chay root was inferior and the waters by Fort St. George were less favorable for dyeing processes. Knowing that "Masulipatam is become almost desolate, not one house of almost a hundred inhabited . . . [w]e hope some of those fine painters that used to live there are come to inhabit in Madras." By 1696, the London directors had become impatient: "We have writ so much formerly concerning your procuring of fine painters to inhabit Fort St. George . . . that we can add little, but to desire you to give no rest to your thoughts and endeavours until you have obtained some number of those Artificiers that can work to the perfection of a Pattern."[160] Whether the East India Company was successful in attracting these fine painters is unknown. What it suggests, however, is that the warfare and consequent upheaval of the late seventeenth century may have forced even more movement among the great "artificiers" of Machilipatnam, further unmooring the craft from its place and continuing the flow of visual styles and material expertise throughout the Coromandel Coast.

On one level, the textiles discussed in this chapter are portraits of an interconnected, cosmopolitan world, reflections of the diversity of early modern trade. On the other, more local level, these objects resulted from the seventeenth-century migrations of painters and dyers. The precision of the dyer's craft and the painter's materials outlined in this chapter dramatize the challenges faced by artisans when they did move, from Machilipatnam to Madras, or from inland Sri Kalahasti to the coast. In their figural and decorative motifs, painted cotton cloths from the Deccan articulate most fully the human mobility, and the human costs, necessary to produce the art of the global kalamkari trade. Yet an account of this artistic moment must also create seams between the lives of cloth painters and the breadth of their imaginations. If we look closely, this should not be impossible to do. In the seventeenth century, the majority of painted cotton cloths bore decorative patterns—with a liquid line, artisans drew tapering Thai flame motifs, stylized Buddhist wheels for Japan, and effulgent flowers for Europe. The artists of these cloths made an overt display of their inventive flexibility. On the extant seventeenth-century large-scale hangings, each figure is clothed in a spread of fabrics that would rival any regional bazaar—ikat-woven cottons, silks with Chinese clouds, rich brown Italian velvets, resist-dyed blue, red, and purple kalamkari textiles. In the cloths, the artists reveal themselves to be conversant in myriad patterns and to know of their hands in fashioning multiple worlds.

Chapter 5

THE FLOWERING OF MUGHAL TEXTILES IN BRITAIN

An appliqué cloth of modest size used to decorate a bed in the mid-seventeenth century suggests, in miniature, the transitions and translations that occurred when kalamkari cloth entered British homes (fig. 5.1a). To create this six-sided object in the middle years of the seventeenth century, a cloth painter on the southeast coast of India used a bamboo pen with a sharpened point to render a series of round-faced figures who peer out of arched windows. Likely working in the context of the kingdom of Golconda, the painter captured the architecture and dress of the Deccan court's lively culture. The painter delineated the facial features in an alum mordant, which, when combined with the red chay root, would produce fine lines for the figures' noses, eyes, and smooth chins. Many of the robes the artist painted bear blue borders and sashes, an effect produced by dyeing the cloth for a second time in the fermented leaves of the indigo plant.

After the cloth had been laid out to dry on the banks of the Krishna or Godavari Rivers, collected by local merchants, inspected by East India Company factors, and then packed into watertight chests and shipped perhaps from Machilipatnam to London, a person (likely a woman) in Britain snipped the figures out of their original composition and appliquéd them onto a white cotton ground.[1] The needleworker traced each limb of the Deccani figures using white silk thread that she couched onto the background with barely visible anchoring stitches. She went wild with the various materials and textiles that the painter had evoked on the original cloth, using the marbled purple and white fabric to create small windows above the heads of the figures (fig. 5.1b). In her hands, the mottled blue fabric became hard, precious stones bearing star shapes and placed along the bottom windowsill. Her silken couching followed the tapering of the compartments below the figures, into which she inserted porcelain bowls brimming with spiky-topped pomegranates. She parted ways with the Deccani painter over the foliage, importing oversized flowers from another painted cotton chintz cloth. She permitted the blossoms to sway in an unseen breeze and to brush against the figures' floating windows.

In the final product, the figures have been decontextualized, removed from their background and their architectural orders and resituated on a blank white cloth. Whereas two-foot-tall figures occupy the central niches of extant kalamkari hangings (see chapter 4), a garland of flowers becomes the focal point of the composition on the appliquéd panel. Though the work derives from Deccani painted cloths, it was reshaped to fit into the real spaces of a foreign world: the kalamkari painting, brought to Britain, was transformed into a bed hanging. No longer in dialogue with the architecture of Golconda, this textile was made local in the hands of a British embroiderer.

The four previous chapters examined how the circulation of textiles in South Asia's courtly cultures led to a high degree of cosmopolitanism in regional sites and a "shared metaphoric world" in which woven and painted foreign fabrics came to symbolize romance, piety, and allegiance. Textiles that traveled from the ports of Hindustan to Europe, as occurred increasingly throughout the seventeenth century, retained some of this complexity upon arrival, even if these meanings were refracted and altered in the

process of the cloth's absorption into dress and furnishings. This chapter first briefly traces two types of cloth familiar from the Mughal court—thin cotton muslin and woven figural silks—to provide a view of how European and British artists and travelers incorporated these textiles into their paintings and dress. The second part of the chapter begins at the court of William and Mary and considers how the work of a different group of makers, namely female embroiderers, flourished in the interaction with the painted cotton cloth they called "chintz." The importation of chintz coincided with attempts to cultivate Asian flowering plants at the royal Hampton Court Palace and in aristocratic homes. Alongside the more fragile imports of actual floral specimens, chintz became a more enduring means of reshaping the visual and material world of late seventeenth-century Britain.

Muslin and Figural Silk in Painted Form

In the introduction, we learned of a British merchant's complaint that thin cotton muslin held great value among the fashions of the day, despite being but the "shadow of a commodity." Prior to the import of South Asian muslin cloth, early seventeenth-century British poetry and trade records suggest an appreciation for translucent textiles made from linen. The seventeenth century overall saw a turn toward lighter-weight fabrics throughout Europe, including thinner and finer silk and woolen textiles, not only for reasons of price but also for fashion.[2] Diaphanous linen textiles, called "lawns," were given names such as "cobweb lawn" and "smoky lawn."[3] Later in the seventeenth century, as muslin arrived from India, thin textiles also came to be known as "shade."[4] These are atmospheric and airy names for the

OVERLEAF, FIG. 5.1A Textile panel. Cloth: coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed. Embroidery: Britain. Stitched onto a cotton ground, outlined with couched silk, ca. 1640–50. 38⅝ in. (98 cm) × 49⅝ in. (126 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Given by Mr. Nasli M. Heeramaneck, Esq., IS.16–1956.

FIG. 5.1B Detail.

cloth, but dry; they lack the references to water contained in the names for the muslins of Bengal.

European and British painters were also acquainted with how to render thin fabrics, as can be seen in the profusion of starched linen ruffs, diaphanous veils, chemises, and partlets in Elizabethan and Stuart portraits.[5] Yet matters were different as European artists came to depict full garments made from South Asian muslin cloth. When Rembrandt created pen-and-ink drawings after Mughal paintings, he was faithful to the translucency of cloth for female figures, although he gave the white clothing of the male figures an opacity and solidity that departs from Mughal works (fig. 5.2).[6] By contrast, when the French traveler François de La Boullaye-Le-Gouz illustrated a scene of translucent cloth in his seventeenth-century account of his visit to Hindustan, he rendered muslin not as a

FIG. 5.2 Shah Jahan and Dara Shukoh. Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn, the Netherlands. Brown ink and gray wash with scratchwork on Japanese paper prepared with pale brown wash, ca. 1656–61. 8⅜ in. (21.3 cm) × 7 in. (17.8 cm). The J. Paul Getty Museum, 85.GA.44.

veil or a screen but as entirely transparent. In the woodblock print that accompanied his account, the body of the female figure is entirely visible despite the sheet of muslin fabric in front of her (fig. 5.3).[7] The description in the text recounts a textile so delicate that it is possible to see through it. The cloth's translucency did not translate in the medium of the traveler's woodblock print. Mughal painters used gouache, sometimes called opaque "bodycolor," and layered thin applications of white paint on top of the skin, allowing the wash of white cloth to hover above. In the woodblock print, by contrast, the white muslin garment is inscribed so that it does not exist, making the unclothed figure fully visible.

English courtly observers also had exposure to the Safavid figural silk textiles that members of the Mughal court had given as valuable gifts and that painters used to embellish the meaning of their works. The most visually compelling evidence for the presence of figural silks in Europe exists in a series of portraits of envoys from the Safavid court to Europe, including Sir Robert Shirley (fig. 5.4). Shirley, an Englishman, traveled with his brother, Anthony, and the Earl of Essex to the Safavid court in 1598. He stayed in Persian lands for nearly ten years before returning to Europe to act as an envoy on behalf of Shah ʿAbbas. While his contributions were likely exaggerated, he attempted to negotiate a European alliance against Ottoman forces and hatched plans with representatives of the Spanish crown to redirect the raw silk trade to the Persian Gulf and out of Ottoman hands.[8] In 1622, while in Rome to attempt to meet with the pope, Shirley and his wife, Teresia, sat for portraits by Anthony Van Dyck. A sketch of the portrait of Sir Robert Shirley suggests that from the portrait's inception, Van Dyck intended to include and even emphasize the figural nature of Shirley's golden cloak. In the sketch, Van Dyck has noted that against a dark ground color, the cloak should have figural ornament, should be painted in different colors, and should appear as though it is made of velvet.[9] In the final painting, the velvet cloth extends the volume of Shirley's body. Two figures hover on the fabric of the robe. One is a red-clad woman who holds a staff or a very thin flower stem in her hand. Shirley's arm pushes out the cloak at this point in the painting, heightening the sense that the lady's body is arching over the contours of his limbs. Above her, a seated figure tucks his feet beneath his knees and extends his arms outward, as though he is holding himself upright as he floats within the cloth. These are the most visible figures; there is not a regular pattern to the cloth, suggesting that it may have been embroidered instead of woven in a repeating pattern on the loom. It might also indicate that Van Dyck was more interested in

FIG. 5.3 François de La Boullaye-Le-Gouz, *Les voyages et obseruations du Sieur de La Boullaye-Le-Gouz, gentil-homme angeuin* (Paris: Chez Geruais Clousier au Palais, 1653), 141. The Getty Research Institute, 2725–352.

FIG. 5.4 Sir Robert Shirley. Anthony Van Dyck, painted in Rome. Oil on canvas, 1622. 84¼ in. (214 cm) × 50¾ in. (129 cm). The Egremont Collection, Petworth House and Park, West Sussex, National Trust, 486169.

presenting the singularity of these figures than in capturing their recurrence across the expanse of the cloth.

The figures on Sir Robert Shirley's robe share certain qualities with those in Mughal paintings. In their analysis of this work, Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass have argued that Van Dyck's portrait demonstrates a specific early modern sensibility about portraiture: it was the clothing of a figure, the livery, that determined identity, rather than the facial or bodily intimation of an interior subjectivity. In the case of Sir Robert Shirley, they write:

> To us, and probably even within fifty years of its painting, the portrait looks like the epitome of orientalism—the dressing up of an English aristocrat in the exoticism of the East. But this is clearly not how Shirley saw himself, nor how Van Dyck meant to record him. . . . The clothes are not "costume" in the modern theatrical sense. They are the clothes of a man whom Van Dyck records as "*Ambasciatore di Persia in Roma*"—a Persian ambassador, rather than an English aristocrat in fancy dress. The painting thus records a livery rather than a costume—the livery that absorbed and transformed Sir Robert Shirley into the Persian ambassador, the deep making that came from surface inscriptions.[10]

Shirley's participation in ceremonies of investiture, they argue, has transformed the British gentleman in the eyes of Van Dyck, in those of the viewer, and it has transformed Shirley himself. By wearing a cloak presumably given by Shah ʿAbbas, Shirley has been incorporated and "absorbed" into political allegiance with the Shah and has taken on the identity of an ambassador from Persia in Rome. The seemingly superficial dress (the "surface inscriptions"), the "livery" of the envoy, has remade the interior of the man. More recent scholarship has connected the thick materiality of the silk in the painting with the centrality of the Safavid silk trade in Shirley's negotiations, an argument bolstered by the attention to figural silk in a British portrait of Shirley's rival envoy from the Safavid court, Naqd ʿAli Beg (fig. 5.5).[11] In this work, the cloth has been rendered with more precision and the velvet figures resemble those on extant Safavid velvet robes. Yet there is also a layer of signification that Mughal practices of using Safavid figural silk cloth can add to our understanding of these paintings. Just as they did in the robe that Jahangir sent to Raja Rai Singh, the figures on the garments with their flowers and relaxed poses evoke courtly enjoyment and poetic tropes of love. The cloth of the cloak boasts that Shirley had not just obeyed the hierarchical political ceremonies of investiture but had been incorporated into the intimacy of the more horizontal social and personal relationships of the court, linkages that were equally vital to establishing standing in the Safavid Empire. In other words, the figures on the cloak, though decorative, were not incidental to Shirley's status as a political and social envoy. Even if European or British viewers did not know precisely what they saw, these fabric figures sharing the space in Van Dyck's portrait conveyed something crucial: that Shirley's legitimacy as an envoy emerged not solely from his subjugation to the Shah but from his interconnectedness and embeddedness in Safavid social life.

FIG. 5.5 Portrait of Naqd ʿAli Beg. Richard Greenbury, Britain. Oil on canvas, 1626. 83⅞ in. (213 cm) × 51 in. (129.5 cm). The British Library, London, F23.

NAKD ALI BEG
ENVOY FROM PERSIA.
Painted by Wm Kirkpatrick 1826.

Chintz in the Era of William and Mary A century later, in his 1724 volume of *Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Daniel Defoe (author of *Robinson Crusoe*) looked back to the end of the seventeenth century and recorded what he perceived to be the "customs" brought to the British Isles by King William III and Queen Mary II, the monarchs who arrived from the Netherlands to usher in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. William and Mary each brought two "customs," which Defoe enumerates. King William III (r. 1689–1702) introduced "a love of gardening" and "of painting." Queen Mary II, who reigned from 1689 until her death in 1694, "brought in the love of fine East-India Callicoes, such as were then call'd Masslapatan Chints." Queen Mary also "brought in the Custom or Humour, as I may call it, of furnishing Houses with China-Ware, which increased to a strange degree afterwards."[12]

While King William's contributions were salubrious to the landscape and sense of beauty in England and Scotland, Queen Mary's affection for "East India Callicoes" and "China-Ware" had been, according to Defoe, inadvertently damaging. The favor for "chints" "afterwards descended into the Humours of the Common People so much, as to make them Greivous [*sic*] to our Trade, and Ruining to our Manufactures and the Poor." Writing thirty years after the death of Queen Mary, Defoe, a virulent critic of Asian imports, was careful to note that "the Good Queen far from designing any Injury to the Country where she was so entirely belov'd, little thought she was in either of these laying a Foundation for such fatal excesses, and would no doubt have been the first to have reform'd them had she lived to see it."[13]

By 1724, Daniel Defoe had emerged as a leading opponent of the importation of South Asian textiles and Chinese porcelain. Defoe based his battle in mercantilist economics. A former merchant in the wool trade, Defoe deplored the imbalance in exchange between Britain and Asia, blaming the East India Company for draining Britain of valuable bullion in return for the "trifling" goods of India and China. His writings returned again and again to the plight of domestic textile producers—the spinners, dyers, weavers, and merchants of British wool, silk, and linen who, he claimed, were being destroyed by the influx of Indian cotton goods. Writing in the late 1720s, Defoe lamented that the East India ships "went out full of Money, and came home full of Poison; for it was all Poison to our Trade: The immense Sums of ready Money that went abroad to India impoverish'd our Trade, and indeed bid fair to starve it, and, in a word, to beggar the Nation."[14]

Defoe identified a turning point during the reign of William and Mary when objects like Indian chintz and Chinese porcelain were transformed from rare and precious belongings to ubiquitous trade goods. Although Defoe argued that Indian textiles and Chinese porcelains were "curiosities" and unknown in England at the time of Queen Mary's arrival from the Netherlands, they were not actually such novelties. The long seventeenth century had seen the rise of imports from both India and China.[15] Yet a change in taste did accompany William and Mary's assumption to the throne. In their redecoration of Hampton Court Palace and renovations to what was then known as Kensington House in London, William and Mary introduced a style inflected by both French baroque ornament and imported goods from China, Japan, and India.[16] Queen Mary, in particular, is credited with bringing the Dutch taste for Chinese porcelain, as

well as innovative decorative shelving that showcased the ceramics in a dense and immersive manner.[17]

The connection critics drew between Queen Mary and imported commodities was not simply a historical fact but also an expression of a nascent ideological turn, expressed by Daniel Defoe, that associated female consumers with objects of Asian manufacture and that blamed women for excessive consumption of foreign goods.[18] In recent studies, Queen Mary II has been restored agency; one account argues that she self-consciously aligned herself with a mercantile style in order to draw closer cultural linkages between Protestant Britain and the Netherlands, powers that had been at war for much of the seventeenth century.[19] In most cases, the scholarship on Queen Mary's reign focuses on the exceptional volume of her collection of Chinese, Japanese, and Delft ceramics.[20] Less attention has been paid to the fact that Mary devoted herself to textiles as well. As Defoe wrote of Queen Mary's two contributions to British culture, just as important as porcelain was her "love of . . . Masslapatan Chints."

In its geographic precision (if faulty transcription), the reference that Defoe makes to Machilipatnam chintz connects Queen Mary II to her contemporaries in the Mughal Empire, who also sought textiles from this site. But instead of the Mughal mobile tent in which chintz was used for doorways and enclosure linings, chintz for Mary served as hangings within the enclosed space of her bedroom. Moreover, Queen Mary was herself an avid textile producer. Accounts of her reign suggest that she was regularly at work with a needle, "always knotting thread." A contemporary observer wrote of Mary, "In all those hours that were not given to better employment, she wrought with her own hands; and sometimes with so constant a diligence as if she had been [forced] to earn her bread by it. It was a new thing and looked a sight to see a Queen work for so many hours a day."[21] She outfitted Hampton Court and her other residences with her own needlework; alongside the "fine Chints bed" that Defoe saw at Hampton Court was "another [bed] of her own work, while in Holland, very magnificent."[22] Queen Mary's tactile knowledge of textiles provides a final way of understanding the export of an art of cloth from the Mughal world—a sphere that extended, through trade and diplomacy, from Machilipatnam to London. As a monarch who was also a maker, Mary likely attached different meanings to the "fine Chints" that she hung from her bed. Queen Mary's own Machilipatnam textiles no longer remain, but this chapter explores objects that were made primarily by female needleworkers in Britain during approximately the course of Mary's lifetime (1662–94). These works either responded to the style of chintz or incorporated fragments of it, and they collectively demonstrate how Britain was drawn into the art of Mughal cloth.[23]

The Seventeenth-Century Chintz Trade In the early seventeenth century, the British imported only negligible quantities of painted cotton textiles for home consumption, from sixty to one hundred pieces a year. As one trader with the East India Company wrote of Indian textiles in 1643, "they serve more to content and pleasure our friends than for any profit that ariseth in sales."[24] These textiles, if they made it to England, were souvenir cargo, brought home as curiosities rather than as profit-earning wares.

This changed in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Increased popularity of Coromandel Coast cottons at home, combined with expanded efforts on the part of European joint-stock trading companies, meant that by the 1680s when trade was at its peak, the English and Dutch East India companies were shipping home four million bales of cotton cloth from India's northern Coromandel Coast alone.[25] Economic and cultural historians, including Giorgio Riello, Prasannan Parthasarathi, and Tirthankar Roy, have written extensively about the international market in textiles from this period, citing the textile trade as the founding example of global exchange.[26] For most historians, it is the volume and foreignness of Indian imports, rather than the look of them, that make this moment so novel.[27] Chandra Mukerji, for instance, argued that the primary significance of chintz textiles for critics like Defoe was the fact of their being foreign-made imports: "There was nothing particular in the designs that made them [chintz cloths] political symbols to textile manufacturers in Britain (although their designs had everything to do with their fashion). What gave them political significance was that Indians produced them and Britons consumed them rather than locally produced fabrics."[28]

Yet the fact that some of the textiles contained visual forms, including floral blooms and human figures, also meant that these objects directly reshaped the visual aesthetics of Britain. In this way, textiles exported from South Asia participated in the circulation of goods and ideas that created what Sanjay Subrahmanyam has called "connected histories," when people around the globe experienced an "age of travel and discovery, of geographical redefinition."[29] This period also witnessed the dissemination of illustrated, ethnographic travel narratives and the extension of print culture.[30] Textiles have rarely been studied as sites of imagery, as preference has been given to the woodblock prints and engravings that are credited with spreading visual representations of foreign peoples abroad. Yet textiles were very efficient in circulating exotic imagery because they were used intimately within the home and, in many parts of the world, were more ubiquitous than the relatively novel medium of print.

In the standard narrative, by the late seventeenth century, Indian painted and printed cottons stirred up a "craze" among European women who were delighted with the exotic patterns, the wild flowers, and the materiality of the light and color-fast cotton that was easier to wash than wool and silk and brighter when dyed than linen.[31] Unlike other colored cloth, the dyes on chintz textiles would remain, in the words of the French bishop Pierre-Daniel Huet, "as long as the cloth itself."[32] Chintz cloths, like Chinese porcelain and tea, and New World coffee and chocolate, were products of far-off realms that revolutionized the domestic interior and enlivened provincial daily life. The "calico craze" for Indian cloth began in the 1660s and died out only at the end of the eighteenth century when the Industrial Revolution made possible the replacement of Indian cottons with British-made goods.

While this narrative contains instances of political and social turmoil caused by cottons, it overlooks the fact that English and Indian textiles were already entangled, their histories already interwoven, by at least the middle of the seventeenth century.[33] Tracing earlier transfers of patterns, techniques, colors, and figural motifs reveals a different

story. Indian textiles began to appear in Elizabethan inventories at the end of the sixteenth century.[34] These moments of contact occurred before the period of high trade facilitated by the East India Company. Around the middle of the seventeenth century, when Indian painted cotton cloth still came to Britain as curiosities, embroiderers like those of the Victoria and Albert Museum bed hanging cut out the small, painted motifs from chintz textiles and appliquéd them onto a cotton ground, couching the edges to give them three-dimensional form. Embroiderers began to add foreign figures to their own works—small, turbaned men and striped domed buildings. At the end of the seventeenth century, a style attributed to South Asia came to flourish within crewelwork embroidery, the name given to embroidery that used worsted wool threads.[35] Thus by the time that Queen Mary II arrived in England, a primarily female textile tradition had emerged that adapted textile motifs, techniques, and stylistic flourishes from South Asian cotton textiles onto British cloth.

The Evidence in Appliqué The Victoria and Albert Museum textile with which this chapter opened serves as physical evidence for the existence of figural South Asian cloth in seventeenth-century Britain.[36] References to the rare figural chintz cloths can also be found in textual sources. In 1665, John Evelyn's diaries described Indian chintz wall hangings in Lady Mordaunt's house at Ashted as "full of figures great and small, prettily representing sundry trades and occupations of the Indians, with their habits."[37] The appliqué textile suggests an active interaction with imported textiles and that the rare British recipients of these cloths did not passively view the textiles but thoughtfully cut out and rearranged the motifs.

Classic feminist studies of domestic needlework, such as Rozsika Parker's *The Subversive Stitch*, recovered both the normative, controlling nature of embroidery and the subversive potential for female agency in the process of making.[38] More recent scholarship has explored the complexity of female craft pursuits in the eighteenth century, arguing against earlier tropes that focused only on female consumption. This recent work proposes instead the active, intellectual engagement that British women performed in the production, and not just consumption, of crafted works.[39] Female makers were also contributing to emergent discourses of European imperialism through the popular eighteenth-century crafts of shellwork and Japanning, in which women brought together nautical species from around the globe to fashion houses and picture frames, or decorated wooden objects with chinoiserie scenes and homemade lacquer.[40] The implicit control over the East and West Indies could be expressed in the diversity of shells, while views about cultural difference were made manifest in orientalizing scenes.[41] Most scholarship focuses on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the nature of seventeenth-century engagements with South Asian textiles may contain early cultural commentary, but they also reflect a period when the Mughal Empire's manufacturing and economic dominance dwarfed that of early modern Britain. Moreover, the intricacy of the painted cotton textiles demanded a complex response. Sanjay Subrahmanyam writes that the highly skilled craft objects and manuscripts that came to Europe from South Asia starting in the late sixteenth century were items of "sufficient cultural

density and complexity that they had to be interpreted and translated in the sense that a sheaf of cinnamon or a sack of pepper might not. . . . The entire process can be seen as a multiple unfolding of different dimensions of a knowledge complex."[42]

Works of appliqué indicate that the interpretation of figural textiles from the Coromandel Coast was a "multiple unfolding" process. Appliqué is essentially an additive technique. The needleworker brings together shapes and designs from other pieces of cloth by snipping them out and sewing them onto a new background. This kind of piecing together was also done with completed embroidered shapes and designs, called "slips," which were then cut out and tacked onto another backing, often of linen or cotton.[43] In this process, the original shape or design usually retained its integrity of form, while the needleworker used a variety of stitches to affix the piece of cloth to the backing and then to outline it with glossier silk threads to catch the light. For these reasons, the medium of appliqué in particular lent itself to fusions of textiles that were diverse in their origins.[44]

FIG. 5.6 Remains of vestments. Britain. Patterned cloth of gold with raised loops affixed with pieces from embroidered garments, late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire, National Trust, 75789.

British textile artists often used appliqué for emblematic works. Queen Elizabeth's contemporary, Bess of Hardwick, filled her homes at Chatsworth, Hardwick Hall, and Oldcotes with diverse and sumptuous Flemish tapestries and linen damasks, Italian laces, and domestic embroidery made by her staff of needleworkers.[45] She also owned multiple sets of wall and bed hangings made from appliqué work that depicted, among other themes, over forty personifications of virtues, the figures of the liberal arts, and a juxtaposition of Faith and Mahomet.[46] In these appliqué objects, the embroiderer tacked down cut-out silken figures against a black background and sheltered them with an appliquéd architectural frame. The dissolution of

Roman Catholic monasteries in the years after the English Reformation led to a large secondhand trade in embroidered vestments that had once been the property of the church.[47] English embroiderers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries cut up these vestments and appliquéd the images into new settings in which beautifully rendered saints stood below the fragment of an embroidered arch (fig. 5.6).[48]

The use of kalamkari cloth in British appliqués suggests that the embroiderers valued the designs on the cotton cloths and conceived of these flat-painted works as equivalent to the precious embroidered patches. The sewn appliqué objects reveal a desire to preserve the figural patterns painted on imported cottons and a perception of the painted figures as finished pieces that could be removed and placed in alternative arrangements. While the figures on the Amber-Jaipur velvets seen in chapter 3 were overlaid with the markings of Hindu devotees, the figures on the appliqué objects have been cut out but have retained their original decorative forms.

This practice of appliqué as a manner of reusing or repurposing cloth was not confined to Britain or Europe. A narrow panel of kalamkari appliqué, now in the collection of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, includes figures that were likely cut from painted cotton *rūmāl*s similar to those seen in chapter 3 (figs. 5.7a and 5.7b).[49] While its provenance is unknown, it seems more likely that this appliqué work was made in South Asia.[50] The arrangement of the figures is compact, preserving more faithfully the composition of the original *rūmāl*, and the work is set against a cotton ground. The panel contains a seated woman in a veil who wears a short blouse and billowing trousers. A red-and-white resist-dyed veil drapes over her head and shoulders and comes to curving folds at her waist. She holds a circular object that might be a piece of embroidered work or a drum. She turns to face a turbaned man who leans against a red bolster pillow patterned with a white resist dye. In this case, the needleworker has outlined faces, turbans, and porcelain vases in light blue silk stitches but has not interfered with the red and indigo-blue

FIG. 5.7A Fragment of a coverlet. Cloth: coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed. Embroidery: probably India. Stitched onto a cotton ground, outlined with couched silk, mid-seventeenth century. 5¼ in. (13.34 cm) × 29¾ in. (75.57 cm). Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Gift of Blythe W. Branch, 39.8.1.

patterns of the standing courtiers' *jāma*s, nor with their chevron-patterned trousers. There is some abrasion and fading on the surfaces of the figures' garments that also obscures their faces. The appliqué work may have been a means of salvaging cloth that had been damaged, something that was also common in Britain where valued chintz textiles were recycled from garments, snipped into pieces, and fashioned into quilts.[51]

On both the Victoria and Albert Museum's bed hanging and the Virginia fragment, the needleworkers seem to have inserted a layer of cloth or paper as batting, a term from quilting that refers to the stuffing between two layers of cloth, to add three-dimensionality.[52] This aim to bring figures out from the cloth was also present in the seventeenth-century form of British embroidery called "raised work," in which embroiderers not only padded the figures from behind but also affixed wooden heads and real hair, as well as pieces of coral and crystal and masses of twisted silk, to create three-dimensional landscapes.[53] The increasing naturalism of these embroidered worlds carried over into the embroiderers' usage of kalamkari fabrics. The needleworker who made the Victoria and Albert Museum hanging was not merely assimilating new figures into existing contexts but seems to have been considering their novel scenic elements. With its open windows, the Victoria and Albert Museum's appliquéd textile (see fig. 5.1) captures the relaxed sociability of the figures and communicates a value of conviviality that was central to conceptions of urban life in the Deccan. By arranging the figures in conversational pairs or by putting the figures in their balconies within earshot of one another, the British textile artist brought to life the imagined sounds of distant cities.

FIG. 5.7B Detail.

FIG. 5.8 Bed curtain. Britain. Linen and cotton, twill weave (fustian), embroidered with wool, long and short, satin and stem stitches, with laid and couched work and French knots, 1690–1710. 88 in. (223 cm) × 54 in. (137.1 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 72B-1897.

Exploration through Embroidery Stitches British women in the late seventeenth century took their scissors and needles directly to pieces of Indian cotton; they also translated both iconographic and technical features of imported textiles into their own embroidered creations. This occurred most noticeably in the form of British domestic embroidery known as crewelwork. Crewelwork was the term given to embroidery made with smooth, long-staple worsted wool fibers called "crewels."[54] Celia Fiennes, who published an account of her travels by horseback across England in the late seventeenth century, wrote that Queen Mary II was devoted to this form of embroidery. In the Queen's Closet at Windsor Castle, Fiennes found "the hangings, Chaires, Stooles, and Screen the same, all of Satten stitch done in worsteads, beasts, birds, ymages, and ffruites, all wrought very ffinely by Queen Mary and her Maids of Honour."[55] In her reference to hangings and furnishings worked in "worsteads," Fiennes is describing crewelwork textiles.

In the late seventeenth century, formal conventions of regular compartments and coiling stems that enclosed roses, thistles, frogs, and rabbits gave way to free-form blossoming trees that were snaked with vines and bore effulgent, almost animate flowers (fig. 5.8).[56] The rise in crewelwork of a loosely arranged embroidery style with oversized flowers coincided with the early influx of cotton chintz textiles from India.[57] Crewelwork embroidery, done at home, is associated with a certain level of comfort and intimacy that would seemingly preclude the insertion of unassimilated foreign forms. Yet the crewelwork textiles from the late seventeenth century appear to have been made in dialogue with imported painted cotton textiles from the Coromandel Coast.[58] The relationship between chintz and crewelwork has been primarily studied from an iconographic or stylistic perspective, given the very visible evidence for the importation of tiny figures and modes of drawing from kalamkari cloth. Yet the cotton textiles and wool embroideries also interacted on the level of embroidery stitches and materials, suggesting a fine-tuned awareness on the part of embroiderers of the more subtle qualities of these imported textiles.[59]

At the most apparent level, crewelwork embroideries are full of unexpected figures. Leopards populate many embroidered works, as do elephants and men with South Asian headgear. While this imagery may have arrived via ceramics, wooden inlay objects, or printed books, imported textiles likely played a considerable role in the introduction of these

figures to the British embroiderers. An incidental inclusion on a crewelwork bed hanging now at the Victoria and Albert Museum suggests the textile origin of at least one motif (fig. 5.9a). On the cloth, the embroiderer has depicted many of the typical forms of imagery from late seventeenth-century textiles: exotic flowers, leopards, and brightly feathered birds. In an unusual gesture, the embroiderer has placed a small house along the bottom of the hanging. While the embroidery scholar John Nevinson gave the house the generic chinoiserie title of a "pagoda," it is a form that could only have come from a South Asian painted cotton.[60] The striated roof of the house, bulbous dome, and pointed eves are a close copy of the architectural forms that exist on almost every known figural painted cotton cloth (see fig. I.1a).

It was not only the motifs represented on chintz but also the particular formal qualities of how they were represented that suggest a response to South Asian cloth, and imports more generally. Ebeltje Hartkamp-Jonxis writes of how the large-scale, abstracted flowers on Indian chintz textiles and East Asian ceramics, "in which each flower consists of clearly defined petals filled in with simply graded colors," had come to be known by the early eighteenth century as "*Indianische Blumen* or *Fleurs des Indes* ('Indian flowers' in German and French, respectively)," in contrast to "a more naturalistic, botanically recognizable representation of flowers in European textiles and

FIG. 5.9A Hanging. Britain. Linen and cotton, twill weave (fustian), embroidered with wool, long and short, satin, chain and stem stitches, with laid and couched work and French knots, 1670–99. 75 in. (190.5 cm) × 97⅝ in. (248 cm). Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1390.1904.

porcelain [that] became popular in about 1740."[61] This effect can be seen on the open-faced lotus flower in the far left of the crewelwork hanging (fig. 5.9b). Each pointed petal of the lotus is outlined first in a darker pink succession of stitches and then filled in with gradations of lighter colors. As Hartkamp-Jonxis suggests, the way of rendering the flowers on Indian chintz and Chinese silks, with their stylized range of colors, identified them in Germany and France as the products of India and of Asia more generally.

One of the most striking features shared by the chintz and crewelwork embroideries is their textured, toothy leaves. The dentated shape and twisting curves of the leaf forms have been attributed to a variety of materials and objects—from classical acanthus leaves found in period pattern books to a reinterpretation of an English oak leaf.[62] Katharine Brett and John Irwin identified precursors for the fantastical leaves in Italian lace patterns and Flemish verdure tapestries.[63] Lanto Synge notes that the vegetation may derive from "heavier leaf designs in French and Italian baroque silks, which were bold, formalised and no longer naturalistic, and themselves partly derived from Ottoman patterns."[64] The snaking leaves could also have come more directly from South Asian textile artists' responses to the trade in Ottoman silks and ceramics where this type of jagged leaf was associated with the *saz* style, a form of decoration that married the floral with forest imagery of hungry demons and lashing dragon tails.[65]

FIG. 5.9B Detail.

In the production of a cotton chintz textile, the painter could use a curving line of liquid mordants to capture the elegant spines and pointed edges of the *saz*-style leaves (fig. 5.10). The translation of these leaves into wool embroidery stitches required a creative set of adaptations.[66] British embroiderers likely used patterns drawn onto the ground cloth by professionals, leaving the female embroiderers responsible for choosing the colors, stitches, and patterns with which they filled in the outlined designs.[67] On a set of crewelwork curtains that are stitched with the date of 1696, the maker has set the leaves curling and looping at oblique angles (fig. 5.11a). To replicate the intricate internal patterning that Indian dyers would create on flower petals using a wax resist, the embroiderers sent the texture outward, filling the centers of the leaves with layers of deep green, blue, and brown knots, waves, and checkers (fig. 5.11b). Whereas a more traditional "asparagus" or "feather" pattern would be executed in herringbone stitch to highlight its materiality as an embroidered object as well as the skill of its maker, the embroiderers who copied kalamkari cottons and Chinese silks used long, densely arranged stitches in a way that obscured the fact that the object was made of woolen thread rather than painted cotton or fine silk. As Fiennes notes, Queen Mary II and others used satin stitch to give a supple smoothness to the petals of their peony flowers, tulips, and lilies. They took advantage of the fact that embroidery is not confined to a grid pattern or a loom's repeats to shape crooked elbows in tree limbs and affix delicately sloping tails to phoenixes.

In addition to motifs taken from Indian chintz, Queen Mary II and her contemporaries also had direct access to South Asian embroideries. Because embroidery stitches and patterns were transferred through the medium of the sampler—itself an embroidered object that other embroiderers could copy to imitate a certain stitch or pattern—foreign objects may have been treated like samplers themselves.[68] Embroidery is unlike most textile media in that it requires little technology to accomplish. Whereas a British

FIG. 5.10 Bed cover (Palampore) (detail). Coastal southeastern India. Cotton, plain weave, hand painted, mordant and resist dyed, eighteenth century. 107 in. (271.8 cm) × 77¾ in. (197.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Purchase, Bequest of George Blumenthal and Gift of Indjoudjian Freres, by exchange, and The Friends of the Islamic Department Fund, 1982 (1982.66).

RIGHT, FIG. 5.11A Curtain. Britain. Linen and cotton, twill weave (fustian), embroidered with wool, 1696–99. 46 1/16 in. (117 cm) × 42 ½ in. (108 cm). Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, 961.120.1.

BELOW, FIG. 5.11B Detail.

weaver could not replicate the fabric of a silk textile woven on a Persian drawloom without loom technology, an embroiderer required only a Spanish steel needle, dyed wool thread, and a fine piece of linen, silk, or a mixed linen-cotton cloth ground in order to approximate the effects of any other embroidered object that came into his or her possession. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries offer many examples of embroiderers imitating the effects of more sophisticated textile technologies in simpler, embroidered forms—from Italian brocades to Turkish carpets to linen damasks.[69]

Two early embroidered Indian quilts made it to Britain, where they entered the possession of Bess of Hardwick and appear in a 1601 inventory. Rosemary Crill has argued that a single surviving quilt made in Bengal that remains in the Hardwick Hall collection was probably one of the two mentioned in this early inventory, suggesting that it came to Britain right before or at the start of the seventeenth century.[70] This quilt is executed in a rare polychrome manner, with brightly colored back-stitch outlines of human figures, birds, and beasts (fig. 5.12). The staff of embroiderers at Hardwick Hall may have taken up this novel Indian quilt and taught themselves back-stitch to mimic their Bengali counterparts.[71]

Queen Mary II also had in her collection South Asian embroideries as inspiration for her needlework objects. Fiennes noted in a bedchamber at Windsor Castle a bed covered in "fine Indian quilting and embroidery of silk," while in the queen's collections at Hampton Court there were "Indian embroideries" in the private chambers.[72] Queen Mary may have replicated some of the stitches that she found on these cloths. In fact, shortly after Queen Mary's reign, the chain stitch that had arrived on imported embroideries from Gujarat began to be used "to the exclusion of almost all other stitches" on British embroidery.[73]

FIG. 5.12 Bedspread. Bengal. Cotton, embroidered with silk, late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. 87⅜ in. (222 cm) × 120⅞ in. (307 cm). Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire, National Trust, 1129504.

Chintz and the crewelwork textiles also share a color language that is distinctive to the dye palettes of South Asia. The crewelwork embroiderers in the late seventeenth century drew upon a base palette of red and blue that differed from the greener tones of earlier seventeenth-century English embroidery.[74] To capture the darkening at the edge of a flower, the embroiderer packed together single curving lines of different shades of red, ranging from pale peach and rose to maroon, and wine-colored worsted threads. This juxtaposition of pink and red right next to each other would have been familiar from South Asian chintz textiles.[75] On kalamkari cotton textiles, the cloth painter could apply different concentrations of mordants and other substances to the cloth that would yield gradations of red and pink colors upon immersion in the dye bath. By contrast, British embroiderers were working with discrete stitches that made color shifts more visible. The embroiderers used dense layerings of long and short stitches, or close rows of chain stitch, to approximate the rich, concentrated colors of the painted cottons, which were saturated with dyes. For the dark underside of a leaf, they deployed varying shades of green to replicate the color of indigo made green by the application of a yellow dye.

In perhaps the most understated form of connection with cotton chintz, the crewelwork embroiderers also strove to emulate the appearance and performance of a cotton ground for their embroideries.[76] The majority of crewelwork embroideries from this time are stitched not on pure linen but on a fustian ground, the name typically used for a cloth made from linen warps and cotton wefts.[77] In most cases, as Katharine Brett notes, "the soft cotton weft almost entirely hides the firm linen warp."[78] This hybrid cloth represented the entrance of cotton into the British domestic household in the period before Indian chintz imports were ubiquitous.[79] While some cotton yarn was already imported from India and the Ottoman Empire, the majority of fustian in the seventeenth century came from northern Italy and southern Germany; some may have also been homespun.[80] With its white color and soft texture, it was the closest fabric to Indian cotton that Europeans produced.

Queen Mary's Gardens and the Moving Flowers of Chintz When Queen Mary II arrived in London from the Netherlands, she brought not only her full porcelain collection and her textile bed hangings but also hundreds of living hothouse plants. William and Mary's collection of exotic flowering plants and fruit trees, which was supplemented by a purchase from Gaspar Fagel in 1692, required the transformation of Hampton Court Palace's Pond Garden into a series of glass greenhouses (fig. 5.13).[81] As Jan Woudstra has found, these new "Glass Case" gardens were made possible by Dutch innovations in greenhouse technology and included heated floors.[82] The three glass cases were long and narrow and covered considerable space: each measured 55 feet by 8 feet.[83] Inside the glass cases were what one observer, Christopher Hatton, recorded as "about 400 rare Indian plantes which were never seen in England."[84] While Woudstra's archival research into the possible varietals of plants suggests a wide diversity of origins, the attribution to "India" of all things exotic is typical of the period.[85] The collection that William and Mary purchased from Gaspar Fagel did include plants native to South Asia: jasmine shrubs (*Jasminum sambac*) and the true cinnamon tree from Sri Lanka

(*Cinnamomum verum*) but also pineapple plants from Brazil and the sago palm (*Cycas revoluta Thunb.*) from Japan, in addition to a wide variety of tulips.[86]

Over the course of the first few years of William and Mary's reign, the hothouse plants do not seem to have thrived. Woudstra's analysis of archives from 1690 to 1693 suggests that the exotic plant collection diminished in three years from 450 to 235 plants.[87] Perhaps for this reason, the glass houses were replaced in 1701. Although William III was given credit for garden innovation by Defoe and was responsible for the perpetuation of the gardens after 1694, the loss of the exotic plants upon their arrival to England might have had significance for Queen Mary's textile collection as well.

Beverly Lemire writes of the temporal overlap between the rise of the South Asian textile trade and the early commerce in exotic plants: "At the same time as some European sea captains carried the first samples of Indian flowered fabrics back to Europe, other voyagers sought out flora from the new colonial and trading areas of Asia, Africa, North and South America, hoping these would find favor with botanists and eventually find a wider market in northern gardens."[88] Lemire notes that imported Asian textiles and flowers gradually became "naturalized" in the home, in the sense both of citizenship and of "the vegetative process, the rooting and spreading of new flora in a once alien soil."[89] On a broad scale, over the course of the long eighteenth century both exotic plants and exotic cloth were "domesticated" in northern European homes through innovations in greenhouses and gardening and through technology to replicate Indian cloth.

Queen Mary's hothouse gardens may tell an important second story of the impossibility of fully domesticating that which needs warmth and bountiful light to survive. The glass houses, despite being heated by powerful stoves, warmed from beneath the floors, and angled toward the sun, could not approximate the forest of Sri Lanka or the flowerbeds of Mughal gardens. And so the plants that had been carefully gathered and

FIG. 5.13 Bird's-eye view of Hampton Court from the south. Leonard Knyff, Britain. Pen and brown ink, with brown and gray wash on paper, ca. 1702. 16¼ in. (41.2 cm) × 23 in. (58.5 cm). The British Museum, London, 1961,0408.1.

transported could not survive. South Asian textiles, on the other hand, bore their flora and fauna bravely. Painted, in some instances, by the same artists who would go on to illustrate European botanical treatises, these cloths carried flowers across great distances.[90] On the "Masslapatan" chintz, the blooms continually intertwined on the bed curtains. In the Queen's Chamber of State at Windsor, done up in "Indian embroidery on white sattin" that Celia Fiennes noted had been given to Queen Mary by the East India Company, there were embroidered "great plumes of white feathers."[91] In Queen Mary's own embroidered renditions of Asian cloths, she could fully appropriate, and fix in time, the fleeting plant life in her glass houses and the exotic birds that she also kept at Hampton Court. Through textiles, Queen Mary preserved the "great plumes" of Asia.

There was still some difference, however, between consuming cloth in Agra, Delhi, or Amber and in London. Textiles could not be entirely domesticated even if the story of manufacturing tells otherwise. By the end of the eighteenth century, the worldwide demand for painted cotton textiles from India declined as Europe began producing its own, block-printed renditions of chintz cloth. American plantations were already cultivating Indian varietals of indigo. In the 1740s, Armenian dyers in Marseilles taught French artisans the techniques to dye cotton in the bright crimson color that had come to be known as "Turkey red."[92] The long presence of madder dyes in Europe at this point seemed to suggest that Europeans had mastered all that they needed to know about Indian cloth. The distinctive ruby-red dyes of the chay root, however, were scarce on European cloth. While the French attempted to import chay root dyes in the eighteenth century, and the English experimented with the dye material, chay root was never cultivated on a large scale in Europe.[93] It was also never imported from India in large amounts because, as George Watt warned, "chay-root rapidly deteriorates when kept in a dark place, such as the hold of a ship."[94] Like Queen Mary's flowers, the materials of South Asia's textiles were sensitive to transport; the chay root would not produce its vibrant red if it had been kept too long out of the light.

Consumers and producers within the Mughal Empire retained proximate, even intimate, relationships with the textiles that circulated in South Asia. For Emperor Akbar, cotton textiles evoked the regional rivers on whose banks cotton fibers grew; in their colors, cloth and carpets carried with them the visual intensity of Kashmiri flowers or the muted softness of a dove's feathers. In Shah Jahan's moment, freshly dyed fabrics arrived at court with seasonal predictability, alongside the breakfast melons brought from Balkh, the pears from Samarqand, and the mangoes from the Deccan. Queen Mary II, by contrast, received these goods over great distances. Her hothouse flowers, many grown from seeds and bulbs, did not readily transplant to Hampton Court Palace. Textiles, however, could flourish. Though they lost some of their spatial context, Indian textiles gained in density upon being appliquéd into bed hangings. Embroidery gave three-dimensionality to patterns painted in chintz, even if they sacrificed the crispness of the cloth-painter's line. And although the cloths did not arrive as fresh as the fruits and fabrics in Hindustan, their bright dyes, made from chay roots, pomegranate rinds, and indigo leaves, transported some of their vitality.

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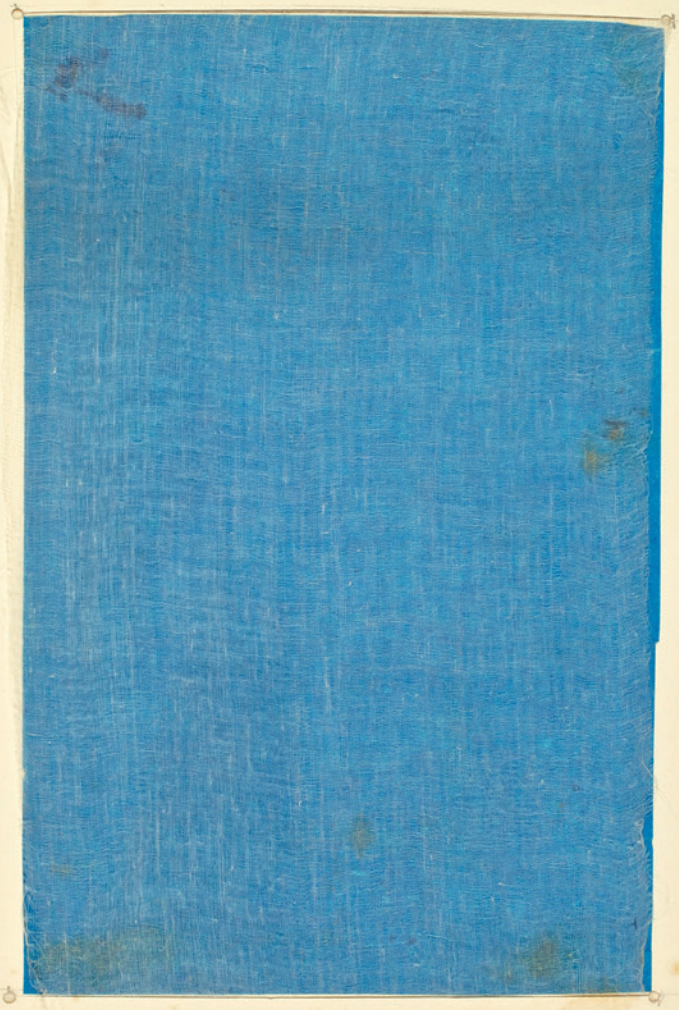

CONCLUSION

There are both historical and historiographic consequences to recalibrating the meaning of textiles in the Mughal Empire. The diverse character and regional nature of textiles played an active role in the formation and sustenance of vast social, economic, and political networks in Hindustan. Fine cotton textiles, known to be the unique product of Bengal, helped connect the recently acquired territory with the expanding empire. The enlarged repertoire of textiles that became available to consumers, along with the poetic language, object names, and metaphorical and affective associations that accompanied them, opened up possibilities for new forms of subjective experience. The result was not just a physical manifestation of what was happening abstractly—an empire governed from afar by a patchwork system of noblemen; a territory patrolled by a constantly moving army composed from all parts of the empire; and increasingly multicultural bureaucracies staffed by immigrants from Iran, scholars from North India, and military generals from Africa. What emerged was a sensory language of proximity, warmth, and affection that clothed, stood in for, or actually embodied crucial political tenets of these imperial relationships. Textiles acknowledged distance and mobility, and yet brought people closer due to their sensory immediacy.

The five chapters of this book have explored the production of woven silks, painted cottons, and wool embroideries, tracing the circulation of textiles from Iran to Agra and Golconda, and from Machilipatnam to Amber and London. The book investigated the specific conditions under which textile objects were consumed, gifted, and then hung in the bedroom of a palace or wrapped around the waist of a prince. The sensory and aesthetic values inherent to textiles—their textures, smells, colors, and patterns—cannot be easily equated with economic or political narratives, or with the logics of colonial control or provincial isolation.

The agricultural, seasonal, and ecological processes of textile production were one of the great sources of creativity in South Asia's textile industry. Not only regional expertise but regional water composition, dyestuffs, and weather patterns helped to determine well-defined geographical specialties for the production of textiles. These restrictions on sites of production were known to fine connoisseurs of textiles; the materials that existed only in one corner of the vast empire were part of what gave value to an import. In fact, the identification of a cloth with the waters of a regional river, or with the deep ruby dyes of a particular shrub, contributed to the rich, layered sense of place that emerged in the early modern South Asian art of cloth. An agricultural and ecological understanding of cloth also heightened the temporal awareness of textiles: of the time and patience needed to produce them; of the growing seasons for cotton and dye plants; of the freshness of a textile that arrived in time for a festival.

The Mughal emperors and their Rajput allies did not consume cloth based solely on the inherent value of its materials or the time-consuming intricacy of its construction. In the case of Rajasthan's and Gujarat's relatively humble cotton *bandhanī* textiles, for instance, the emperors wore long lengths of the fabric as *patkā* sashes to symbolize their ties with the regions that produced the cloth. In turn, the regional rulers of Amber kept

pace with or even exceeded the Mughal emperors in their consumption of knotted carpets, figural silks, and Machilipatnam *chīnt*, layering velvet, Persian-style textiles alongside plaster wall paintings of the dancing god Krishna.

The fourth chapter added nuance to previous histories of the early modern South Asian textile trade by suggesting that European intervention in the seventeenth century was only one story of many mercantile histories in southeastern India. The mobility and agency of artisans predated contact with European merchants and persisted well into the eighteenth century. Moreover, the particular shades of dyes or uses of a wax resist grew out of the turbulent movement of the Coromandel Coast's artisans, as well as the region's long history of trade and cultural exchange with Safavid and Ottoman lands, Southeast Asia, and Japan. The final chapter showed that the strong imprint of South Asian textiles on British visual culture was not limited to the painted cotton textiles that Europeans began importing in great numbers at the end of the seventeenth century. Instead, the transformation of taste started with imported embroideries at the end of the sixteenth century and reached its height in the whirling crewelwork objects that closed out the seventeenth.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the culture of cloth in South Asia underwent numerous changes. In the eighteenth century, European involvement grew in the textile industries of the Coromandel Coast and Bengal as the East India companies used their expanding military, economic leverage, and political machinations to transform their mercantile outposts into territorial holdings.[1] The Mughal Empire's control over all of North India and the Deccan receded after the 1707 death of Emperor ʿAlamgir as the result of an overextended military, the expansion of Maratha control, and the self-proclaimed independence of regional rulers.[2] The regional centers that rose to prominence in the eighteenth century, including kingdoms throughout Rajasthan and in Bengal, Awadh, Mysore, and the Maratha states, invited artisans from surrounding regions to work for their courts.[3] As a result of artisan mobility and decreased patronage for hand-painting, the craft of block-printing expanded throughout the eighteenth century.[4] The Amber-Jaipur court seems to have purchased fewer hand-painted cotton cloths, and patterns with human figures on kalamkari were largely restricted to temple and religious settings. Eighteenth-century weavers migrated from villages and cities wracked by war to the newly independent royal states and European factories throughout southern India.[5] Carpet production prospered outside the city of Hyderabad, carrying on a tradition that had begun with the migration of Persian and Central Asian weavers to Golconda in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Monumental woolen carpets filled the Hyderabadi palaces of Asaf Jah, a Mughal governor who proclaimed his independence in 1724.[6] Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore, supported the growth of the silk industry in Karnataka by importing silkworm eggs from Bengal and abroad. Mysore entered the nineteenth century as a center of the production of raw silk.[7] In the late eighteenth century, British and French neoclassical dress styles, which favored simple, elegant white fabrics, led to a demand for Bengali muslins, bringing these textiles not only to Britain and France but also to the early United States.[8]

OVERLEAF, FIG. C.1
Plain muslin called "Shubnam" ("evening dew"). Cloth: Dhaka, Bangladesh. From John Forbes Watson, *The Collection of the Textile Manufacturers of India*, volume 7, Textile Number 243, London, 1866. Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston, Lancashire.

In this period Europe, and particularly Britain, became largely independent in the production of cotton textiles. In the 1790s, planters expanded the cultivation of cotton to the American South, further entrenching the institution of slavery. British looms were fed with a steady supply of raw cotton in addition to the indigo already being imported from the United States.[9] The last decades of the eighteenth century brought a series of British and American inventions that led to the mechanization of cotton production.[10] Mechanical spinning mills required more uniformly cleaned cotton, spurring the adoption of the cotton gin to process large quantities of cotton. Mechanically powered looms depended upon mill-spun thread for its strength and regularity, replacing a textile culture of variation and regional suitability. With the development of roller printing, the textile patterns produced by mechanized engraved cylinders also became smaller and more uniform.[11] In the 1850s, European chemists began to produce chemical dyes that were made from laboratory compounds instead of naturally occurring mineral or plant materials.[12] The precise shades of chemical dyes had the potential to be reliable, even if they faded quickly and were toxic, polluting the riverways in which the dyed cloths were washed. Aniline dyes, made from coal-tar products, soon spread to factories throughout Europe and to India. Scientific management supplanted the artisan's tacit knowledge and the culture of creative adaptation. It is a testament to the chay root's superiority that the most widespread chemical dye for red contains a synthetic form of alizarin, the chay root's primary colorant.

The increased supply of cotton, the invention of mechanized spinning and weaving, and the growing sophistication of textile printing, dyeing, and weaving led to a rapid rise in the productivity of the British textile industry. In 1774, the British Parliament repealed its ban on Indian painted and printed cottons that had been levied in 1701 to protect domestic products from South Asian imports. By the close of the eighteenth century, imports of printed cottons comprised only 6 percent of the market; Britain now supplied almost all of its own cloth.[13]

Manufacturers exported the products of their Industrial Revolution to Britain's growing colonial holdings, pressing their goods into American, African, Middle Eastern, and West and South Asian markets using a combination of duty regulations and market-tailored designs. The spread of the railroad across the subcontinent after 1850 allowed cloth from Lancashire, the center of Britain's textile industry, to reach villages in northern India. Even after factoring in the expense of transportation, this foreign cloth cost 30 percent less than homespun, handloom-woven cloth.[14] Between 1850 and 1880, Indian cloth production fell by 40 percent.[15] As the Indian economists Dadabhai Naoroji and Romesh Chunder Dutt would write in their scathing critiques of the British Empire at the close of the nineteenth century, India had been "drained" of its wealth by the British, who extracted only its vast natural resources while crippling the South Asian textile industry by replacing Indian fabrics with cheap, British factory-made cloth.[16]

There were moments when the materiality of textiles themselves resisted colonization, however. John Forbes Watson, collecting Indian cloth for British industrialists to copy, admitted that the fineness of the cotton threads used to fashion the delicate

"evening dew" and "running water" muslin cloths of Dhaka could not be replicated by a British machine (fig. C.1).[17] The wild silks of Assam were imported to France for use in water-resistant garments, given their strength and flexibility.[18] No other fiber could rival the "pashmina" wool from the high-altitude goats. When the British set out their aims in the Treaty of Amritsar with the independent rulers of Kashmir in 1846, they demanded that Maharaja Gulab Singh of Kashmir supply them annually with "twelve perfect shawl goats of approved breed (six male and six female)."[19] This is one of the broader meanings that can be taken forward from this book's chapters: the landscape of textiles in Hindustan was singular and could not simply be replicated on a newly invented machine. Although cotton cloth has been one of the driving forces of colonization, enslavement, and capitalist exploitation, the realities of certain forms of textile production counter these totalizing narratives. Materials and the makers who spun and wove these textiles could disrupt or confound, however momentarily, the mechanisms of an extractive British Empire.

An Alternative History of Cotton: The Sound of Cloth From the late eighteenth century onward, Britain increasingly imported its raw cotton from the southern United States. In the United States, planters grew cotton plants that produced "long-staple" fibers. The longer fibers soon proved to be more conducive to the rapidly emerging industrial techniques of ginning, spinning, and weaving cotton. With the exception of Gujarat, by contrast, the major cotton-producing regions in central, eastern, and southern India grew short-staple cotton. These fibers, shorter already, were reduced to dust in the jaws of the American cotton gin. By the 1820s, British merchants were encouraging small-scale planters in India to grow the long-staple cotton that could feed the manufacturing industry.[20] To meet these demands, South Asian cotton cultivators became increasingly indebted after the purchase of seeds. They sent their cotton crop to mechanized cotton gins, replacing the hand-gins and cotton carding techniques they had previously used.[21] The cultivators had less incentive to grow only the highest-quality seeds, since their cotton would be combined with the crops of other cultivators in the cotton gins. The result was a replacement of short-stapled, indigenous cotton with hybrid or foreign American seeds, leading to crops that were vulnerable to pests and suffered during the heavy monsoon rains.[22]

In the early twentieth century, in response to the drain of wealth from India, anticolonial activists, including, most prominently, Mahatma Gandhi, introduced a form of boycott of British goods known as *swadeshī*, which emphasized in particular the making and wearing of *khādī*, or homespun cloth. The story of the twentieth-century political symbolism of cotton as an equalizing material in Gandhi's *swadeshī* activism is distant in many ways from the elitism of seventeenth-century Mughal courtly cloth. Yet the concern with texture and the vitality of fibers carried through to Gandhi's program of anticolonial activism. As C. A. Bayly argued, *khādī*'s rich potential for meaning grew out of the symbolism of cloth that had existed in South Asia for centuries. Bayly writes: "Gandhi himself went beyond the use of homespun as a mere symbol to penetrate to

even deeper levels of meaning about the nature of weaving as a creative act, about the dhobi's cleansing as a token of redemption, and about the capacity of cloth to retain the luminosity of place and people."[23] Scholars have written about the purity symbolized by the white, *khādī* cloth, about the asceticism of the practice of spinning, and about the effectiveness of the visual message of *khādī*, which put primacy on bodily action and physical practice that did not require literacy.[24] When *khādī* cloth has been mentioned in its material context, it is usually described as being rougher or more variable in texture than machine-made cloth.[25] Yet debates over the texture of *khādī* persisted. Some *swadeshī* activists claimed that the heavy cotton cloth felt as "light as a feather" because of its moral virtue; Jawaharlal Nehru, who became the first prime minister of India, was grateful to receive finely textured cloth from Andhra Pradesh even while in prison.[26]

Perhaps less visible, though, is that *khādī* tied together the agricultural with the anti-industrial, the local plant varietals with the kinds of threads they could eventually produce. In the 1920s, Gandhi's nephew, Maganlal Gandhi, began investigating the most suitable cotton varietals to use in his uncle's mass program of producing *khādī*. As Shambu Prasad recounts, when he went out looking for local short-staple plant types that would produce cotton suitable for hand-ginning, carding, and spinning, he discovered that indigenous varietals were nearing extinction due to competition with American seed.[27] Maganlal Gandhi traced the art of cloth back along an interconnected chain to a specific ecology. While his contemporaries focused on the ruin of craft traditions, he recognized that the demise of the hand-spinning industry had also had a profound effect on agricultural production. The "extinction" of the "marvelous art" of fine spinning and weaving, he wrote, had "spelt the death of fine cotton growing in India."[28]

The key to producing a delicate *khādī* cloth, therefore, relied upon the revival of small-scale, slower, manual approaches to cotton growing, ginning, carding, and spinning practices that would yield threads with more elasticity and more durable cloths. The cotton seeds' exposure to the sun while drying, which Gandhi prescribed, gave the cotton more durability.[29] In the *Chārkha Shāstra*, his manual on the production of raw cotton, Maganlal Gandhi wrote in artistic terms about the cotton plant: "In our language we express our highest praise for a person or thing by saying that he, she or it is gold and fragrance in one i.e. that it combines beauty with use. This combination is found in cotton in a greater degree than in any other vegetable product. In spring its flowers with their soft silken petals of hues varying from deep and light yellow to soft pink and glossy crimson can stand comparison with any; while in autumn when the cotton pods burst its plant again looks like a white flowering plant weighed down under its mass of snow."[30] Though sharing little in ideology or disposition, Maganlal Gandhi and Akbar held an appreciation for the color of the cotton flower. For Akbar, it was ranked just below grass green and ahead of sandalwood.[31]

The timing of the cotton harvest was of the utmost importance, a fact that had been lost in the constant rush of the economic pressures of the cotton trade. The way a cultivator knew that the cotton was ready, according to Maganlal Gandhi, was by the sound it made when a cultivator took it in hand. This "habit of observation" was "a most valuable

acquirement of man as necessary for matters worldly as for matters spiritual."[32] In one of the most beautiful passages in the writing about cotton, he states:

> Take a small quantity of cotton. Grasp half of it in each hand and then divide it into two parts by pulling away the hands. If the sound (of separation) is dry and gritty, it means the cotton is strong and good. If low, it is the contrary. Sound varies directly according to quality. To be able to detect the differences in this sound requires almost the same capacity as is required for distinguishing the finest variations in a musical note.[33]

Maganlal Gandhi here is speaking about the music of cotton, the notes that a healthy plant will make in the ear of someone with a craftsman's knowledge of growth and maturity. The poetry of textiles can take many forms, and the development of a sensory language of not only *khādī*-spinning and weaving but cotton growing was one of the most politically and economically resonant idioms in which cloth came to speak.

If we listen closely enough, the values, poetry, and music of textiles remain in the objects, in the practices of their makers, and in the imaginative worlds that they inspire when they circulate and are consumed in other places. The intimacy of textiles is not always romantic or exotic, but sometimes is uncomfortable and tragic. A cloth made in the lap of an embroiderer and worn against the skin of its purchaser brings people into close contact; it permits them, or requires them, to share a figurative world, to experience the same embodied smells, and to hear the same subtle whispering sounds that textiles make when they move. All of these qualities were well understood by our predecessors in the seventeenth century, who felt perhaps more keenly the responsibilities that these textile encounters demanded, whether in the form of a land grant to an infirm master dyer or the creative permission granted to a painter. We could do worse than to revive this ability to imagine the figures with which our fabrics are imbued.

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NOTES

Introduction

1 Gwatkin, "The Brooklyn Museum Hanging"; Morris, "Enter the Royal Encampment"; Gommans, "Cosmopolitanism and Imagination." The Brooklyn Museum hangings also embody the later nineteenth- and twentieth-century fate of many of South Asia's finest remaining textiles in having been taken from their original context to a collection in Europe, the United States, or elsewhere in Asia. Stewart Culin, who purchased the original textile for the Brooklyn Museum in Delhi and then divided it into seven hangings, wrote in 1918 that "it was generally agreed that it should remain in India and form part of the national collection." Culin, "Story of the Painted Curtain," 138–40.

2 Kerlogue, "Early English Textile Trade."

3 Parkin, "Textile as Commodity, Dress as Text," 47–48; Machado, "Cloths of a New Fashion"; Fee, "'Cloths with Names'"; Um, *Shipped but Not Sold*, 1, 34–42, 60–71, 84.

4 Guy, *Woven Cargoes*, 158–77; Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World*, 169.

5 Hartkamp-Jonxis, *Sitsen uit India*.

6 Crill, "Revolution in the Bedroom"; Crill, *Chintz*; Houghteling, "From Foot-Cloth to Petticoat."

7 Riello and Roy, *How India Clothed the World*, 1–27.

8 On the concept of the scale of networks, see Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 184.

9 Asif, *Loss of Hindustan*, 1–13.

10 Bahār, *Bahār-i ʿajam*, 1894.

11 See Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*; Fee, *Cloth That Changed the World*; Riello, *Cotton*; Lemire, *Cotton*; Riello and Roy, *How India Clothed the World*; Riello and Parthasarathi, *Spinning World*; Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*; Schäfer, Riello, and Molà, *Threads of Global Desire*.

12 On textiles, see Peck, *Interwoven Globe*. For explorations of a diversity of media, see Corrigan et al., *Asia in Amsterdam*; Carr et al., *Made in the Americas*.

13 For a productive discussion of various approaches to global art history, see Avcıoğlu and Flood, "Introduction: Globalizing Cultures."

14 Wielenga, "Geography of Weaving," 149.

15 For example, see Barnes, *Textiles in Indian Ocean Societies*; Bhandari, *Jewelled Textiles*; Edwards, *Block Printed Textiles of India*; Fee, *Cloth That Changed the World*; Fotheringham, *Indian Textile Sourcebook*; Ghosh, *Making Kantha, Making Home*; Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World*; Lambourn, *Abraham's Luggage*; Oliver, *Art, Trade, and Imperialism*; Ramaswamy, *Textiles and Weavers*; Sethi, "Many Meanings of Punjabi Phulkaris"; Varadarajan, *South Indian Traditions of Kalamkari*; Varadarajan and Amin-Patel, *Of Fibre and Loom*; Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*.

16 Irwin and Brett, *Origins of Chintz*; Irwin and Hall, *Indian Painted and Printed Fabrics*; Irwin, *Indian Embroideries*. See also the seven volumes of the *Journal of Indian Textile History*, published between 1955 and 1967.

17 Barnes, Cohen, and Crill, *Trade, Temple & Court*; Crill, *Fabric of India*; Crill, *Textiles from India*; Dhamija, *Sacred Textiles of India*; Goswamy et al., *Indian Costumes II*; Jain, *Indian Lampas-Weave Silks*; Jain, *Rapture*.

18 Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*; Singh and Vashishtha, *Pathways to Literature, Art and Archaeology*.

19 Dale, *Muslim Empires*; Bayly, "India and West Asia."

20 Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Mughal State*; Faruqui, *Princes of the Mughal Empire*; Richards, "Formation of Imperial Authority."

21 Habib, "Indian Textile Industry."

22 Habib, *Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, 8; Dale, "Silk Road, Cotton Road."

23 Raychaudhuri and Habib, *Cambridge Economic History of India*, 268–69; Subrahmanyam, *Political Economy of Commerce*; Gordon, "Burhanpur."

24 Brennig, "Textile Producers and Production."

25 Washbrook, "Progress and Problems," 60.

26 See Raychaudhuri and Habib, *Cambridge Economic History of India*, 163–67 for a discussion of the debate over the methods for calculating this figure; see also Asher and Talbot, *India before Europe*, 152.

27 Vries, "Population," 13.

28 The distance from Qandahar (a site that the Mughal Empire continually battled to control) to Guwahati, Assam, is approximately 1,680 miles, while the distance from London to Moscow is approximately 1,790 miles. For calculations, I have used Google Earth.

29 Anooshahr, "Letter-Writing and Emotional Communities," 10–12; Ziegler, "Some Notes on Rajput Loyalties." Ziegler writes of the ruler of the Rajput principality of Marwar: "His involvement

in external affairs was so great that the Mārvāṛi chronicle of his reign records his having said, when Jahangir ordered him home to settle some local problem: 'What will I do if I go home? I don't know anything about affairs at home'" (170).

30 O'Kane, "From Tents to Pavilions."

31 Wink, "Post-Nomadic Empires," 121–22. Wink cites an advisor to Emperor Timur in the late fourteenth century as cautioning: "Although we may subdue Hind [India], yet if we tarry in that land, our posterity will be lost; and our children, and grandchildren, will degenerate from the vigour of their forefathers, and become speakers of the language of Hind" (122).

32 Balabanlilar, *Imperial Identity in the Mughal Empire*, 71–99 (for Jahangir's itinerancy, see 94–99) and Chowdhury, "Imperial Mughal Tent." See also Babaie, *Isfahan and Its Palaces*, 40–42; Dimmig, "Fabricating a New Image."

33 Sinopoli, "Monumentality and Mobility in Mughal Capitals," 305.

34 Fischel, *Local States in an Imperial World*, 106–48; Overton, *Iran and the Deccan*; Flatt, *Courts of the Deccan Sultanates*.

35 Subrahmanyam, "Iranians Abroad."

36 Kia, *Persianate Selves*; Flatt, *Courts of the Deccan Sultanates*, 50–59; Eaton, *Social History of the Deccan*, 61–62.

37 Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 61–75. On Babur's father alternating his headgear between the Turco-Mongol cap and a Persianized turban, see Eaton, *India in the Persianate Age*, 197. Emma Tarlo describes the fluidity of identity as expressed by dress in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (*Clothing Matters*, 15–18).

38 Riello and Rublack, *The Right to Dress*; see in particular Zilfi, "Women, Minorities and the Changing Politics of Dress in the Ottoman Empire."

39 Blanch, *The Naked Truth*, 11. My thanks to Christine Stevenson for locating the 1696 source. Quoted in Beck, *Draper's Dictionary*, 233; Ashmore, *Muslin*, 8; Berg, "'Merest Shadows of a Commodity.'"

40 Riello, "Luxury or Commodity."

41 See Habib, *Agrarian System of Mughal India*.

42 Habib, "Potentialities of Capitalistic Development." For critiques and revisions of this model, see Perlin, "Proto-Industrialization"; Subrahmanyam, *Merchants, Markets and the State*; Subrahmanyam, "Rural Industry"; Washbrook, "Progress and Problems."

43 Habib, "Indian Textile Industry."

44 Ibid., 184–85.

45 Moosvi, *Economy of the Mughal Empire*, 339–40.

46 Bayly, "Origins of Swadeshi," 299.

47 Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India*; Koch, *Mughal Art and Imperial Ideology*; Seyller, *Workshop and Patron*; Stronge, *Painting for the Mughal Emperor*; Topsfield, *Court Painting in Rajasthan*; Chandra and Ehnbom, *Tuti-Nama*.

48 Busch, *Poetry of Kings*; Schofield, "Reviving the Golden Age Again"; Sharma, *Mughal Arcadia*; Truschke, *Culture of Encounters*.

49 Aitken, *Intelligence of Tradition*; Singh, *Real Birds in Imagined Gardens*; Dadlani, *From Stone to Paper*; Khera, *Place of Many Moods*; Rice, *Agents of Insight*; Shaffer, "'Take All of Them.'"

50 For explorations of diverse media, see Cooke, *Inventing Boston*; Clunas, *Superfluous Things*; Fromont, *Art of Conversion*; Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces*; Collins and Martin, "Early Modern Incense Boats"; Phillips, *Everyday Luxuries*; Russo, *Untranslatable Image*; Swan, *Rarities of These Lands*; Um, *Shipped but Not Sold*; Walker, *Emperor and the World*.

51 Granoff, "Luxury Goods and Intellectual History," 155.

52 Brick, *Brahmanical Theories of the Gift*, 217–18.

53 Weddigen, "Textile Spaces, Interior and Exterior," 165. See also Weddigen, "Notes from the Field: Materiality."

54 Rublack, "Renaissance Dress," 7.

55 Hills, *Veiled Presence*, 24; see also 46.

56 Watt and Wardwell, *When Silk Was Gold*; Mackie, *Symbols of Power*; Bier, "Patterns in Time and Space"; Contadini, "Threads of Ornament"; Bush, *Reframing the Alhambra*, 10, 174–91; Saba, "Abbasid Lusterware"; Markel, *Mughal and Early Modern Metalware*, 58, 72, 116; Williams, "Gems in Cloth and Stone"; Wolf, "Vesting Walls."

57 Golombek, "Draped Universe of Islam."

58 For nuanced discussions of the historiography of textiles and Islamic art, see Schulz, "Crossroads of Cloth," 101–5; Lenssen, "Travels of the Carpet Myth"; Blessing, "Draping, Wrapping, Hanging."

59 Jansen, "Fashion and the Phantasmagoria of Modernity"; Lemire and Riello, *Dressing Global Bodies*. For recent studies of fashion systems operating beyond Europe, see Chen, *Empire of Style*; Rado, "Encountering Magnificence"; Shea, *Mongol Court Dress*; Silberstein, *Fashionable Century*.

60 For a call to expand the reach of fashion studies, see Bruno, *Surface*, 40. See also McCall, "Brilliant Bodies."

61 On the idea of a "sensory disposition," see Edwards, Gosden, and Phillips, *Sensible Objects*, 7.

62 Said, *Orientalism*, 188.

63 Classen and Howes, "Museum as Sensescape."

64 Lauwrens, "Welcome to the Revolution"; Classen, "Foundations for an Anthropology of the Senses"; Classen, *Worlds of Sense*; Howes, "Charting the Sensorial Revolution"; Harvey, *Sensible Flesh*, 9–10.

65 Pollock, *Rasa Reader*, 7–8, 25–26, 41–45.

66 Ali, "Rethinking the History of the Kāma World"; Ali, *Courtly Culture*; Flatt, *Courts of the Deccan Sultanates*; Khera, *Place of Many Moods*; Khera, "Jagvilasa"; Schofield, "Learning to Taste the Emotions."

67 O'Hanlon, "Kingdom, Household and Body History." On restoring the hubbub of people to the eighteenth-century city of Delhi, see Kaicker, *King and the People*.

68 Lal, *Domesticity and Power*, 60. Bodies and textiles emerge in Lal's account, including when Princess Jahanara saves a dancing girl whose clothing has caught fire by wrapping her in her arms (46).

69 Supriya Gandhi's history of Dara Shukoh illuminates the material and visual world of the court. For discussions of foodstuff, rituals of shaving and abstinence, sprinkling of fragrant scents, and gifts at Dara Shukoh's wedding ceremony, see Gandhi, *Emperor Who Never Was*, 22, 34, 51, 78–79, 211. See also Bokhari, "Imperial Transgressions and Spiritual Investitures," 86–108.

70 Cohen, "Materials and Making," 19.

71 Foster, *English Factories in India, 1630–1633*, 26, 255, 275.

72 Within archaeology, textiles are classed among other "perishable" material remains. See Good, "Archaeological Textiles."

73 On materials and their potential for transformation, see Ingold, "Toward an Ecology of Materials."

74 Jha, "Challenges in the History of Colours," 206; Murphy and Crill, *Tie-Dyed Textiles of India*, 72–73; Houghteling, "Dyeing the Springtime."

75 Chandra, *Costume, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 125.

76 Diamond, "Holi in the Zenana."
77 Bush, *Reframing the Alhambra*, 174–91; Graves, *Arts of Allusion*, 141–51.
78 For a series of essays relating to this connection, see James, Moe, and Trumpener, *Text & Textile*.
79 Clinton, "Image and Metaphor," 8–9.
80 Hess, *Bodies of Song*, 169. Orsini and Schofield, *Tellings and Texts*, 25.
81 Hess, *Bodies of Song*, 168.
82 Ibid., 167.
83 A similar reversal of metaphor occurs in ʿAbdi Bey Shirazi's sixteenth-century poem *Jannat-i ʿAdn* (Garden of Eden): Losensky, "Palace of Praise," 20. My thanks to Shahzad Bashir for informing me of this passage of text.
84 Husain, "*Gulshan-i Ishq*," 116.
85 Ibid., 118. *Pītambar* can describe being dressed in yellow clothes or can refer to a yellow silk garment. *Pītambar* can also be a title for Krishna or for a religious devotee wearing yellow clothes. "Pītambar," see "pīt" (yellow), in McGregor, *Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary*, 633.
86 Husain, "*Gulshan-i Ishq*," 118. Husain writes that the merlin wears a *dandharas* fabric. Given the dark and light speckled feathers of the red-headed merlin, "*dandharas*" might be a Dakhani version of the word *bandhāras* or *bandhānas* fabric, the tie-dyed fabric of Rajasthan and Gujarat. Chandramani Singh lists *dānedār* as a "fabric with dots." See Singh, *Textiles and Costumes*, 157.
87 See Metropolitan Museum of Art, Acc. No. 28.162.1 and Yale University Art Gallery, Acc. No. 1937.5326. On images of the turkey, see Ray, "From New Spain to Mughal India."
88 Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Mughal State*, 56.
89 Smart, "Preliminary Report"; Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*.
90 Christopher Wood critiques the tendency to "idealize" objects in motion "almost as our better selves." In Flood et al., "Roundtable," 7.
91 Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, 130–40.
92 DuPlessis, *Material Atlantic*, 60–68; Kriger, "'Guinea Cloth'"; Fromont, "Common Threads"; Oliver, *Art, Trade, and Imperialism*, 74–94; Skeehan, "Caribbean Women"; Arabindan-Kesson, *Black Bodies, White Gold*, 70.

Chapter 1

1 Habib, "Three Early Farmans of Akbar."
2 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 91. Bernard Cohn also discusses these lists in "Cloth, Clothes, and Colonialism," 316.
3 Bloom and Blair, *Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art*, 38; for a discussion of the significance of the colors worn by Akbar's father, Humayun, see Moin, *Millennial Sovereign*, 120–22. On the Mongol practice of donning "robes of one color" at court, see Allsen, *Commodity and Exchange*, 19–23.
4 Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 29. Ulinka Rublack provides a valuable rethinking of the idea of the "period eye" in relation to the textures and colors of fabrics in European Renaissance dress. See Rublack, "Renaissance Dress," 28–29.
5 This chapter builds upon material first published in Houghteling, "Emperor's Humbler Clothes." I am grateful to the editors of *Ars Orientalis* for granting me permission to include parts of this text.
6 Moosvi, *Economy of the Mughal Empire*, 332–33. In her analysis of agricultural commodity prices in the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, Shireen Moosvi has argued that the prices given for wheat and cotton were the retail prices at the market, not wholesale prices offered to the emperor, although prices also varied if the emperor left his capital on a military campaign.
7 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 73.
8 The word वर्णक (*varṇak* or *varṇaka*) is from the word for color (varṇa). He, "Prose Varṇaka," 84. On descriptive passages of text, see Raghavan, *Bhoja's Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa*, 15; Peterson, *Design and Rhetoric*, 229n43. Interestingly, *varṇaka* also referred to a dye material in medieval Indian philosophical texts. See Granoff, "Luxury Goods and Intellectual History," 158.
9 He, "Prose Varṇaka."
10 Chatterji, "English Introduction," xxi–xxii.
11 Ibid., xxxiii. Similarly, Allison Busch writes of the *nagaravarṇana* ("description of a city") genre that appears in Braj poetry, "The point here is not to list methodically the produce and commercial transactions of the realm—as one might find in a Mughal source like *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*—but to create a poetic evocation of the marketplace, with all its colorful sights and smells" ("Portrait of a Raja," 308).
12 Flatt notes: "Kevra is an extract made from the male flowers of the screw-pine tree, *Pandanus odoratissimus*, commonly used in Ayurveda" (*Courts of the Deccan Sultanates*, 63n121).
13 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 83.
14 Ibid., 80.
15 Roberts, "Copley's Cargo," 38. See also Roberts, *Transporting Visions*.
16 Qandhari, *Tarikh-i Akbari*, 175.
17 For Ottoman examples of this practice, see Atasoy, *İpek, the Crescent & the Rose*, 31.
18 The carpet welcoming Shah Jahan to the wedding of Dara Shukoh measured 3.6 kilometers. See Popp, "Presents Given to and by Jahangir and Shah Jahan," 137.
19 Qandhari, *Tarikh-i Akbari*, 176.
20 Lal, *Domesticity and Power*, 126, 217.
21 Qandhari, *Tarikh-i Akbari*, 177.
22 Ibid., 177–78.
23 Ibid., 282. Also noted in Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*, 29.
24 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari* [Persian], 104–7.
25 Hakala, "On Equal Terms."
26 Translation in Habib, "Akbar and Technology," 133.
27 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari* [Persian], 105.
28 Sharma, *Mughal Arcadia*, 102–3.
29 Riboud et al., *Samit & Lampas*; Cohen, "Assamese Lampas," 62.
30 Jain, *Indian Lampas-Weave Silks*.
31 Blurton, *Krishna in the Garden of Assam*; Crill, "Vaishnavite Silks."
32 Cohen, "Textiles, Dress, and Attire"; Goswamy et al., *Indian Costumes II*.
33 Varadarajan and Amin-Patel, *Of Fibre and Loom*, 98.
34 Platts, *Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi, and English*, 1039, s.v. "mashrūʿ."
35 Fotheringham, *Indian Textile Sourcebook*, 19.
36 Goswamy, *Indian Costumes*, 142.
37 Bhogilal Jayachandbhai Sandesara first published these descriptive works in his *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*. Moti Chandra translated selections from Sandesara's text and offered potential interpretations of their meaning. Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*. I am indebted to Ami Potter for her incredible help in translating the Gujarati *varnaka* texts from Sandesara's *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*.
38 Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*, 1:1.
39 Ibid., 1:4.
40 Ibid., 1:171–80.
41 Ibid., 1:180, translation by Ami Potter.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.; Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 155.

44 Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*, 2:38; Steingass, *Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, 517, s.v. "daryā." Chandra interprets this as "striped." Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 157.
45 Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*, 1:180.
46 Ibid.; Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 157.
47 Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*, 1:180–81.
48 Ibid., 1:34, 2:51; Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 159–60.
49 Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*, 1:180–81.
50 Ibid., 1:34; Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 153. *Kuñcita* translates to "contracted; bent, curved; curly." See Macdonell, *Practical Sanskrit Dictionary*, 69, s.v. "kuñkita." Note that this is distinctive from "ākuñcita," which means "smooth." Macdonell, *Practical Sanskrit Dictionary*, 1, s.v. "ākuñcita." Many thanks to Phyllis Granoff for her help with this term.
51 Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*, 1:181; Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 159.
52 Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*, 1:180; Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 154. See Macdonell, *Practical Sanskrit Dictionary*, 93, s.v. "cal," defined as "move, sway, shake, tremble, quiver."
53 Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*, 1:181, translation by Ami Potter.
54 Dale, "Silk Road, Cotton Road," 79–80.
55 Habib, "Indian Textile Industry," 186; Habib, *Atlas of the Mughal Empire*, 8.
56 Habib, "Indian Textile Industry," 186; Naqvi, "Some Varieties of Indian Silken Stuffs," 115; Chaudhury, "International Trade in Bengal Silk," 375; Hutková, *English East India Company's Silk Enterprise in Bengal*.
57 Matthee, *Politics of Trade in Safavid Iran*, 21. See also McCabe, *Shah's Silk for Europe's Silver*; Phillips, *Sea Change*, 123.
58 Faroqhi, "Trade between the Ottomans and Safavids," 243–44.
59 Steinmann, "Shah ʿAbbas and the Royal Silk Trade," 73.
60 Vainker, *Chinese Silk*, 144.
61 Matthee, Floor, and Clawson, *Monetary History of Iran*, 57; Dale, *Indian Merchants and Eurasian Trade*, 21–22.
62 Lally, "Pattern of Trade," 22.
63 Varadarajan, "Silk in Northeastern and Eastern India," 564, 568.
64 Peigler, "Wild Silks of the World," 152.
65 Ibid., 153.
66 King, *Silk and Empire*, 119.
67 Peigler, "Wild Silks of the World," 159. This figure is illustrated in Gommans, *Unseen World*, 72.
68 Alam, "History of Sericulture in India," 341.
69 Peigler, "Wild Silks of the World," 155.
70 Palchoudhury and Dutta, "Satgaon Quilts," 68; Karl, *Embroidered Histories*.
71 Crill, *Fabric of India*, 176; Crill, "Earliest Survivors?"
72 Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*, 1:180.
73 Blochmann suggests that *tusar* refers to *tessa* cloth, made in Patna and Burhanpur. Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 94n5. The term *tasar* refers to "coarse silk" in a Prakrit text, the *Karpūramañjari*, of the ninth or tenth century. Lotika Varadarajan notes that *tasar* then entered the "Bengali vernacular" between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. See Varadarajan, "Silk in Northeastern and Eastern India," 567.
74 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari* [Persian], 107.
75 Cazim also wrote that the silks of Assam were "of excellent quality and as resembling those of China." Cazim, "Description of Asàm," 232–33. The French traveler Tavernier wrote less appreciatively that Assam had a "great store of silk but coarse." Quoted in Taylor, "Remarks on the Sequel," 69.
76 Raychaudhuri and Habib, *Cambridge Economic History of India*, 272. Raychaudhuri and Habib characterize *tāutband* as having been made from *eri* silk, not from jute as W. H. Moreland claimed.
77 Singh et al., "Mitochondrial Genome of Muga Silkworm"; King, *Silk and Empire*, 96.
78 Jain, *Indian Lampas-Weave Silks*, 30.
79 Houghteling, "Emperor's Humbler Clothes." On the values given to objects in South Asia that differed from their exchange value, see Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 18.
80 For a consideration of the sensory experience of distinctive materials in early modern China, see Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces*.
81 Grabar, "The Shared Culture of Objects."
82 Banarasidas, *Ardhakathanak*, 104–5.
83 Ibid., 106–7. For the original text (a mixture of north Indian Braj Bhasha and Khari Boli), see Lath, *Half a Tale*, 169.
84 Banarasidas, *Ardhakathanak*, 118–19.
85 Kumar, *Costumes and Textiles of Royal India*, 38; Goswamy, *Indian Costumes*, 15.
86 See, for instance, the description of a felt tent erected in Sikri, India, for a festival. Babur, *Baburnama*, 399.
87 Thompson, "Early Safavid Carpets," 307. See also Cohen, "The Use of Fine Goat Hair."
88 Floor, *Persian Textile Industry*, 59, cited in Maktabi, "Under the Peacock Throne," 343.
89 Thompson, "Early Safavid Carpets," 307.
90 Ibid., 308.
91 In the English translation, Blochmann has listed the *takya-namad* as from "Kabul and Persia," but the Persian version lists only "Kabuli." Abu'l Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari* [Persian], 110–11.
92 Babur, *Baburnama*, 171.
93 Cohen, "Materials and Making," 26–27. See Cohen et al., *Kashmir Shawls*; Rizvi and Ahmed, *Pashmina*.
94 Ahmed, "Politics of Pashmina," 89–90.
95 Digby, "Export Industries and Handicraft Production"; Cohen, "Materials and Making," 28.
96 Digby, "Export Industries and Handicraft Production," 419. Digby notes that John Irwin believed that shawls made outside of Kashmir were less soft because the wool was of a lesser quality.
97 Cohen, "Materials and Making," 28.
98 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 92; translation in Habib, "Akbar and Technology," 132–33.
99 Steingass, *Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, 253, s.v. "pashm." For the suffix "*-ina*," see also Barker, *A Course in Urdu*, 155–56.
100 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 95.
101 One mohur was valued at roughly nine rupees in 1595; one rupee is the equivalent of approximately fifteen dollars in 2009 prices. For mohur to rupee rates, see Raychaudhuri and Habib, *Cambridge Economic History of India*, 367; for rupee to dollar calculations, see Faruqui, *Princes of the Mughal Empire*, 82.
102 Kashifi Sabzawari, *Royal Book of Spiritual Chivalry*, 165–66.
103 Cohen, "Textiles, Dress, and Attire," 180–81.
104 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 90.
105 Macdonell, *Practical Sanskrit Dictionary*, 153, s.v. "paramā."
106 Steingass, *Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, 1395, s.v. "narm."
107 Mukhlis, *Encyclopaedic Dictionary*, 171.
108 Mann, "On the Cotton Trade of India," 350.
109 Ray, "Far-Flung Fabrics."
110 Dale, "Silk Road, Cotton Road," 84.
111 This was reported by Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, quoted in Ashmore, *Muslin*, 19.

112 Naqvi, *Urban Centres and Industries*, 147; Bayly, "Origins of Swadeshi," 300.
113 Chandra, *Costume, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 169.
114 Islam, *Muslin*, 49.
115 Dobson, *Humidity in Cotton Spinning*, 3–5.
116 Ashmore, *Muslin*, 14. See also Islam, *Muslin*.
117 Jain, *Indian Lampas-Weave Silks*, 4.
118 Alkazi, *Medieval Indian Costume*, 268.
119 Floor, *Persian Textile Industry*, 216.
120 Ibid., 224.
121 Quoted in ibid.
122 Alkazi, *Medieval Indian Costume*, 268.
123 Goswamy, *Indian Costumes*, 27–35.
124 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 92–96.
125 Steingass, *Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, 602, s.v. "rīsmān."
126 Ashmore, *Muslin*, 8.
127 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 94.
128 Platts, *Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi, and English*, 338, s.v. "tan-sukh." More generally, Steingass defines *tansukh* (and the alternate spelling for the Arabo-Persian *tansūq* تنسوق) as a word meaning "anything rare, precious, present." Steingass, *Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, 328, s.v. "tansukh" and "tansūq."
129 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 2:124.
130 Ibid.
131 Naqvi, "Some Varieties of Indian Silken Stuffs," 120.
132 Kashifi Sabzawari, *Royal Book of Spiritual Chivalry*, 165–66.
133 Alam, *Languages of Political Islam*, 11–14.
134 Tusi, *Nasirean Ethics*, 169, 167. On the importance of Nasir al-Din Tusi's ideas at the Mughal court, see O'Hanlon, "Kingdom, Household and Body History."
135 Quoted in Goswamy, *Indian Costumes*, 31.
136 Ibid.
137 Wagoner, "'Sultan among Hindu Kings,'" 864.
138 Ibid.
139 Ibid., 865.
140 Citing Julie Meisami's translation of *The Sea of Precious Virtues* in ibid., 865n14.
141 Moin, *Millennial Sovereign*, 137; Richards, "Formation of Imperial Authority."
142 See Stronge, *Painting for the Mughal Emperor*, 67–68; Lal, *Domesticity and Power*, 197–98.
143 Geeti Sen also notes the compositional devices that the artist has used to stabilize the scene. Sen, *Paintings from the Akbar Nama*, 77–79.
144 Wagoner, "'Sultan among Hindu Kings,'" 868–71. For additional studies of this textile, see Crill, *Fabric of India*, 131, 136–37; on possible interpretations of the themes on this cloth, see Lefèvre, "A propos d'une célèbre toile peinte"; Varadarajan, Filliozat, and Gittinger, *Study of a Painted Textile*; Rao, Shulman, and Subrahmanyam, *Symbols of Substance*.
145 Seyller, *Workshop and Patron*, 9–12.
146 Ibid., 91. Also published in Beach, *Imperial Image*, 15a.
147 Quoted in Ashmore, *Muslin*, 19.
148 Seyller, Sardar, and Truschke, *Ramayana of Hamida Banu Begum*, 110–11.
149 Carrithers, "Naked Ascetics."
150 Joanne Punzo Waghorne writes also of the ritual of *abhishekham*, the anointing of the kingly body with sacred waters, as a process of "dressing" the king. See Waghorne, *Raja's Magic Clothes*, 226–47.
151 Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 117.
152 Ibid., 122–23. Chandra cites the twelfth-century *Mānasollāsa* by Somesvara.
153 Granoff, "Luxury Goods and Intellectual History," 153.
154 Quoted in Wagoner, "'Sultan among Hindu Kings,'" 864n12.
155 Quoted in Ashmore, *Muslin*, 11.
156 Schimmel, *Two-Colored Brocade*, 294.
157 Ali, *Courtly Culture*, 144–45. Timothy McCall discusses the radiance of the male body in fifteenth-century Italy in "Brilliant Bodies."
158 Ali, *Courtly Culture*, 148.
159 A recent publication on Mughal painting refers to the dark marks on the underarms of both male and female figures' clothing as "musk marks." See Seyller, Sardar, and Truschke, *Ramayana of Hamida Banu Begum*.
160 King, *Scent from the Garden of Paradise*, 157. The fifteenth-century *Niʿmatnāma* of Mandu (central India) suggests applying musk to perfume the armpits. See Titley, *The* Niʿmatnāma *Manuscript*, 76. I am very grateful to Anya King for sharing this reference.
161 Ashmore, *Muslin*, 17.
162 Ray, "Hydroaesthetics in the Little Ice Age," 3; Khera, *Place of Many Moods*, 61–87.
163 Habib, "Akbar and Technology," 134.
164 Sawer, "Grass Oils and Their Varieties," 453.
165 As Azfar Moin has discussed, the symbolism of the veil (*niqāb*) recurs throughout the *Akbarnāma*, particularly in accounts of the emperor's spiritual leadership. Moin, *Millennial Sovereign*, 136–37, 140. References to the veil also appear in Persianate and Islamicate accounts of sacrality and kingship. See Rose, "Sasanian Splendor," 53.
166 Eaton, *Rise of Islam*, 141–44.
167 Ibid., 141.
168 Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 114.
169 Another active scene of putting on a *khilʿat* appears in the illustrated fourteenth-century *Jamiʿ al-Tawārīkh*, which depicts the first Ghaznavid sultan, Mahmud ibn Sebuktegin, donning a robe from the Caliph of Baghdad, an event that took place in 999 CE. Edinburgh University Library, Or. Ms. 20, fol. 121r. See Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 77.
170 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 105.
171 O'Hanlon, "Kingdom, Household and Body History," 891; see also Bayly, *Origins of Nationality in South Asia*, 13–17; Lal, "Settled, Sacred and All-Powerful."
172 Bayly, "Origins of Swadeshi," 298.
173 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 91.
174 Ibid., 87.
175 Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics, & Coiffures*, 153; Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*, 1:180. It is listed as *bandhālaga*.
176 Cohen, "Textiles, Dress, and Attire," 183.
177 Macdonell, *Practical Sanskrit Dictionary*, 190, s.v. "Bandhana."
178 Murphy and Crill, *Tie-Dyed Textiles of India*, 13–16.
179 Hasan, "Textile Production in Mughal Malwa."
180 Joshi, "Ceremonial in Shah Jahan's Court," 115.
181 Khan and Sarkar, *Maāsir-i-ʿĀlamgiri*, 325. 'Alamgir abolished this factory in 1677 (100). See also Dadlani, *From Stone to Paper*, 47.
182 Bayly, "Origins of Swadeshi," 302.
183 Ethé, *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts*, 1280–81. For a more extensive discussion of this volume, see Houghteling, "Dyeing the Springtime." I am grateful to the journal *Religions* for permission to include this material. I thank Ursula Sims-Williams for her help in accessing this text, and Parviz Holakooei for his aid in translating and interpreting it.
184 Naqvi, "Colour Making and Dyeing," 59.
185 Shibayama, Wypyski, and Gagliardi-Mangilli, "Analysis of Natural Dyes."

186 Naqvi, "Colour Making and Dyeing," 66.
187 Dyeing was considered a branch of alchemy in the European classical tradition and in medieval Arabic and Byzantine scholarly texts. See Martelli, "Alchemical Art of Dyeing."
188 On *archimia* (alchemy) dye—"this one an almost uncontrollable mixture of different dyes"—see Molà, *Silk Industry of Renaissance Venice*, 120.
189 Ingold, "Toward an Ecology of Materials," 433–35.

Chapter 2

1 Jahangir, *Jahangirnama*, 51.
2 Faruqui, *Princes of the Mughal Empire*, 186.
3 Cohn, "Cloth, Clothes, and Colonialism," 314.
4 Published in Goetz, *Art and Architecture of Bikaner State*, 122–23; a photograph and reference to the garment also appear in Kumar, *Costumes and Textiles of Royal India*, 40–41.
5 Khadgawat and Rajasthan State Archives, *Descriptive List of Farmans*, 8.
6 I have explored the idea of textiles as bearers of emotion in an earlier essay, portions of which are included in this chapter with the generous permission of the publisher (Brill): Houghteling, "Sentiment in Silk."
7 Stallybrass, "Marx's Coat," 196; on textiles and memory, see also Bruno, *Surface*, 43–45.
8 Babaie and Gibson, *Mercantile Effect*; Gordon, "World of Investiture."
9 In this way, the textile distribution practices of the Mughal Empire can be examined through theories of the gift. Most foundational: Mauss, *The Gift*. Outside of the universalizing theories of early twentieth-century social sciences, historians have argued for more contextualized approaches to gifting practices. See Davis, *Gift in Seventeenth-Century France*; Algazi, "Doing Things with Gifts"; Anderson, "Material Mediators"; Um and Clark, "Introduction: The Art of Embassy."
10 Gordon, "World of Investiture," 2.
11 Ibid., 4. See also Sauer, "Textile Performance of the Written Word."
12 Gordon, "Introduction: Ibn Battuta and a Region of Robing," 28n47.
13 Phillips, "Ottoman Hil'at," 115.
14 Mackie, *Symbols of Power*, 84–127; Baker, *Islamic Textiles*, 53–63.
15 Rosenthal, "A Note on the Mandīl," 94; Golombek, "Draped Universe of Islam," 33.
16 For recent studies of imperial gifting practices, see Popp, "Presents Given to and by Jahangir and Shah Jahan"; Balabanlilar, *Emperor Jahangir*, 67–74; Stronge, "Imperial Gifts at the Court to Hindustan"; on European and Mughal gift exchanges, see Loomba, "Of Gifts, Ambassadors, and Copy-cats"; Siebenhüner, "Approaching Diplomatic and Courtly Gift-giving." For a thorough study of the various sources on Mughal textile gifting, see Shivram, "Court Dress and Robing Ceremony in Mughal India."
17 Jahangir, *Jahangirnama*, 372, 173.
18 Popp, "Presents Given to and by Jahangir and Shah Jahan," 140.
19 Ibid., 141.
20 Ibid., 140–41.
21 Faruqui, *Princes of the Mughal Empire*, 148–62. At the same time, Faruqui notes that "there is no denying that scholars who were contemporary to Jahangir and Shah Jahan . . . viewed Jahangir as a feeble emperor" ("Erasure and Exaltation," 78–80).
22 Hasan, *State and Locality*, 2.
23 On the unusual nature of Jahangir's memoir, and the contrast with the *Akbarnāma*, see Moin, *Millennial Sovereign*, 179–80.
24 Lefèvre, "Recovering a Missing Voice," 462; see also Koch, "Jahangir as Francis Bacon's Ideal."
25 For instance: "On Saturday the first of Shahrivar [August 14] I awarded my loyal tutor, the Khankhanan Sipahsalar, and the amirs assigned to service in the Deccan robes of honor for the rainy season and sent them with Yazdani." Jahangir, *Jahangirnama*, 307.
26 Ibid., 173, 178.
27 After visiting Kashmir, Jahangir wrote, "since it was reported that the poor people of Kashmir suffered greatly from the cold in winter and had a hard time surviving, I ordered a village belonging to Kashmir with an income of four thousand rupees turned over to Mulla Talib Isfahani to spend the proceeds on purchasing clothing for the poor and heating water for making ablutions in the mosques" (ibid., 379).
28 F. W. Buckler focused on this bodily function of the *khil'at*. See Buckler, "The Oriental Despot," 179.
29 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 90.
30 Jahangir, *Jahangirnama*, 361.
31 Khan, "Mirza Aziz Koka Khan-i Azam."
32 Jahangir, *Jahangirnama*, 175.
33 Khan, "Mirza Aziz Koka Khan-i Azam," 223.
34 Jahangir, *Jahangirnama*, 373.
35 Ibid., 303.
36 Ibid., 229.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid., 220. Also in Balabanlilar, *Emperor Jahangir*, 72.
39 Shivram, "Court Dress and Robing Ceremony."
40 Khan and Mir, "Commanding Mandates."
41 Nathan, *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybī*, 1:268. Ali Anooshahr notes that Mirza Nathan's account of the adoption of Mughal practices at Islam Khan's court in Bengal was actually a veiled criticism of Islam Khan, who was later condemned by Jahangir for his "encroachments." Anooshahr, "No Man Can Serve Two Masters," 55. See also Eaton, *Rise of Islam*, 160–67.
42 Nathan, *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybī*, 102.
43 Shalem, "Performance of the Object," 113. On the role of scent in the experience of giving and receiving gifts, see Um, "Nested Containers for Maritime Journeys."
44 Nathan, *Bahāristān-i-Ghaybī*, 5, 22.
45 Ibid., 279.
46 Ibid., 281–82.
47 Anooshahr, "Letter-Writing and Emotional Communities," 10–11. On the art of early modern epistolary exchange in the European context, see Brisman, *Albrecht Dürer and the Epistolary Mode of Address*.
48 Flatt, "Practicing Friendship," 80.
49 Goetz, *Art and Architecture of Bikaner State*, 122–23.
50 Khadgawat and Rajasthan State Archives, *Descriptive List of Farmans*, 8.
51 Ibid., 13.
52 Ibid., 8. However, it is not clear whether this gift would be considered an *'ināyat* (a favor or award) or a *marhamat* (a grace or grant) because an *'ināyat* would come "as an award after success in a task, or an award as part of a promotion," and while one is promised by the letter, it has not yet been granted. Popp, "Presents Given to and by Jahangir," 138–39.
53 Platts, *Dictionary of Urdu*, 417, s.v. synonym for "ćāsh."
54 Habib, "Postal Communications," 237.
55 Ibid., 239–41.
56 Khan and Mir, "Saga of Mughal *Farman*," 4105–6.

57 Habib, "Postal Communications," 243.
58 Floor, *Persian Textile Industry*; Matthee, *Politics of Trade in Safavid Iran*; Canby, *Shah 'Abbas*; Bier, *Persian Velvets*.
59 Necipoğlu, "Early Modern Floral."
60 Smart, "Of Cabbages and Kings," 163.
61 In the *Akbarnāma*, Abu'l Fazl recounts the arrival of the Safavid envoy to India, who brought "choice mares (*qisrāq*), one of which was valued at 5,000 rupees. There were 300 pieces of brocade—all woven by the hands of noted weavers—and fifty masterpieces of Ghīyath Naqshband, and wonderful carpets, which cost in Persia 300 *tumāns* a pair; also choice coverlets (*takyanamad*), splendid *pāīncas*, also, Turkish pavilions, embroidered mattresses, various seeds, and 9 goats (Murgaz) whose fleeces yield wool (*sūf*) and silk (*khārā*), as well as other rarities, and 500 Turkamans in rich dresses" (1113).
62 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 88.
63 Ibid.
64 Skelton, "Ghiyath al-Din 'Ali-yi Naqshband"; Thompson, "Early Safavid Carpets and Textiles," 281, 284.
65 Jain, "Indian Drawloom"; Cohen, "Materials and Making," 54.
66 Jayakar, "Naksha Bandhas of Banaras"; Thompson, "Early Safavid Carpets and Textiles," 275.
67 Cohen, "Materials and Making," 54; Jain, "Indian Drawloom."
68 Pickett, "Rahul Jain's Reimagined Velvet Drawloom."
69 Sonday, "Pattern and Weaves," 64–67; Pope and Ackerman, *Survey of Persian Art*, 2079–90.
70 McWilliams, "Prisoner Imagery in Safavid Textiles."
71 Sonday, "Pattern and Weaves," 59. Sonday identifies this type of pattern arrangement as "a technical repeat unit with two off-set minimum pattern areas."
72 Shirazi-Mahajan, "Costumes and Textile Designs," 193–95. Shirazi-Mahajan tabulated and analyzed the female headdresses that appear in the British Library's *Khamsa* of Nizami (1539–1543, British Library Or. 2265) and the Houghton *Shāhnāma* (The *Shāhnāma* of Shah Tahmasp).
73 Diba, "Clothing"; Scarce, "Vesture and Dress."
74 Quoted in Matthee, "From the Battlefield to the Harem," 107.
75 It has not yet been possible to physically analyze this textile outside of its glass case and a determination about the weave structure cannot be made without doing so. From visual observation, the weaving technique is likely either a taqueté or lampas weave. The visible plain-weave binding, seen on the surface of the cloth, is a characteristic feature of the taqueté technique, a weft-faced weave structure. I thank Rahul Jain and Julie Holyoke for their suggestions about the possible weave structures (email communication, July 13, 2019) and Steven Cohen. For lampas weave, see Sonday, "Pattern and Weaves," 72–76. For taqueté, see El-Homossani, "Early Compound Weave Structures," 160.
76 Clinton, "Image and Metaphor."
77 Pieces of this textile are held by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Acc. No. 46.156.7; Yale University Art Gallery Acc. No. 1937.4625; the Textile Museum, Washington, DC, Acc. No. 3.280. Translation in Ekhtiar et al., *Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art*, 248. See also Bier, *Woven from the Soul*, 184–85.
78 گویی این صورت سراپا جان شده
پرده دار خسرو ایران شده

Gūyī īn ṣūrat sarāpā jān shuda
Pardadār-i khusraw-i Īrān shuda

I thank the late Dr. Abdullah Ghouchani for his generous assistance in the interpretation of this inscription and its translation. Email communication with Dr. Abdullah Ghouchani, March 26, 2014. My thanks also to Shabnam Rahimi-Golkhandan for her help in further interpreting the translations via email, May 7, 2014, and to Behzad Borhan for discussions of the subtleties of this inscription and for his help in rendering and transliterating the inscription, July–August 2018, April 2021. Thank you to Katy Rosenthal for bringing the full pattern into view with her drawing.
79 On the portrait (*sūrat*) as the expression of the inner self, see Natif, *Mughal Occidentalism*, 230.
80 Gordon, "World of Investiture," 2.
81 On the iconography and themes in Jahangir-era painting, see Skelton, "Imperial Symbolism in Mughal Painting"; Moin, *Millennial Sovereign*, 189–209; Rice, "Moonlight Empire."
82 Wright, "The Late Shah Jahan Album."
83 On the "intellectual delectation" that these album borders contributed to painted works, albeit later in the seventeenth century, see Parodi, "Two Pages," 285.
84 Jahangir and Shah Jahan associated themselves with these lovers from Persian epic poetry, particularly with the lovesick Majnun. See Koch, "Mughal Emperor as Solomon," 278. Nazanin Hedayat Munroe argues that Jahangir was particularly drawn to these Sufi-themed textiles because of his self-styling as a figure like Majnun. See Munroe, "Interwoven Lovers."
85 Canby, *Rebellious Reformer*, 168–69.
86 Kavita Singh attributes the contrast between the naturalism of portraiture and the flat, anti-naturalism of carpets and textiles in Jahangir-era paintings to an anxiety among Mughal artists "about being too successful at creating illusions with their art." Singh, *Real Birds in Imagined Gardens*, 69.
87 Rashid al-Din Watwat, twelfth century, in Schimmel, *Two-Colored Brocade*, 322.
88 Alkazi, *Medieval Indian Costume*, 253–57.
89 Lefèvre, "From Jahangir to Shah Jahan," 30–31.
90 See, for example, Phillips, *Sea Change*, 68–69.
91 Stronge, "The Myth of the Timur Ruby."
92 Bailey, "Indian Conquest of Catholic Art."
93 See the San Diego Museum of Art's object label: http://collection.sdmart.org/Obj5569?sid=6374&x=35608&sort=9.
94 Ideas of expressing inner piety and devotion through cloth are also explored in Munroe, "Interwoven Lovers," although this painting is not discussed.
95 Koch, "Shah Jahan," 167.
96 Khan and Khan, *Ma'asir al-Umara*, 1:811–12.
97 Hasan, *Mughal Poetry*, 41–42.
98 Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnāma*, 700. Beveridge notes that various versions of the text, and other contemporary records, provide differing accounts of the length of Rai Singh's absence from court, ranging from two years to nineteen or even twenty-two years.
99 Khan and Khan, *Ma'asir al-Umara*, 2:569; Alam, "Rajput Nobility," 148–49.
100 Khadgawat and Rajasthan State Archives, *Descriptive List of Farmans*, 4.
101 Alam, "Rajput Nobility," 149.
102 Khan and Khan, *Ma'asir al-Umara*, 2:569; Alam, "Rajput Nobility," 149.
103 Moin, *Millennial Sovereign*, 174.
104 Ibid.; Alam, "Rajput Nobility," 153.
105 The Cleveland Museum of Art dates this work to ca. 1590; John Seyller dates it to

ca. 1610. See Seyller, "Mughal Painting during Akbar's Reign," 49–50, n. 29.

106 Aitken, "The Laud Rāgamālā Album," 27–28.

107 For the transliteration of the text on the sketch, see "Portrait of Maharaja Rai Singh of Bikaner," https://clevelandart.org/art/1987.1100.

108 "Portrait of Rai Rai Singh," https://www.rct.uk/collection/1005038-a0/portrait-of-rai-rai-singh.

109 Seyller, *Workshop and Patron*; Aitken, "The Laud Rāgamālā Album," 50; Gupta, "Splendour of the City," 238.

110 Aitken, "The Laud Rāgamālā Album," 47.

111 Ibid., 52; Brown [Schofield], "If Music Be the Food of Love"; Sharma, "Reading the Acts and Lives of Performers."

112 Brown [Schofield], "If Music Be the Food of Love," 74.

113 Deborah Hutton notes that although the description of a lover being held over the heart is frequent in the Sufi literary genre known as the *Prem Marg*, or the "path of love," in only one unique manuscript of the *Pen Nem*, made for the Bijapur court between 1591 and 1604, is this metaphor visually depicted. Hutton, "The *Pen Nem*," 49.

114 Goswamy, *Indian Costumes*, 27.

115 Platts, *Dictionary of Urdu*, 75, s.v. "ulṭā (part. of ulaṭnā, q.v.), adj." and "ulṭā parda, s.m."

116 Ibid., 710, s.v. "sīdhā, adj."

117 On the historical use of a curtain, see Rose, "Sasanian Splendor," 53n68; on the curtain holder, who was also responsible for determining when entertainers were allowed to begin their song, see Shiloah, *Music in the World of Islam*, 8.

118 Khadgawat and Rajasthan State Archives, *Descriptive List of Farmans*, 24.

119 Seyed-Gohrab, *Laylī and Majnūn*, 245.

120 Wright, "The Salim Album"; Parodi, "Two Pages."

121 Wright and Stronge, *Muraqqaʿ*, xvii.

122 Rice, "Global Aspirations of the Mughal Album."

123 Grabar, *Mediation of Ornament*, 216.

124 Ibid., 216–17.

Chapter 3

1 The figure of Jai Singh was identified in Glynn and Smart, "Mughal Icon Re-Examined."

2 Glynn and Smart note that Gaj Singh and Jai Singh were connected by ties of marriage and that the painting may have commemorated the wedding of Gaj Singh and the Amber princess Indar Kanwar. Ibid., 13.

3 Beach and Koch, *King of the World*; Beach, *Imperial Image*; Beach, *Mughal and Rajput Painting*.

4 Glynn and Smart point out that Gaj Singh was the first member of the Marwar ruling family to receive the title of maharaja. The two men can both be found standing near Reza Bahadur (wearing the figural robe) in the painting of Shah Jahan's 1628 accession ceremony (see fig. 2.21). Glynn and Smart, "Mughal Icon Re-Examined," 6, 7.

5 Ibid., 14.

6 The transliterated spelling for the historical site is Amer, but in English-language texts, it is generally rendered as Amber.

7 Smart, "Preliminary Report"; Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 10–11.

8 Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 11.

9 Ibid.

10 As Chanchal Dadlani has recently noted, Mughal architecture did not necessarily equate the monumental with uniformity; Mughal sites "eschewed the idea of monuments as monolithic entities and instead favored expansive, multisensorial complexes" (*From Stone to Paper*, 3).

11 Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 61–87.

12 Sinopoli, "Monumentality and Mobility."

13 Blake, *Shahjahanabad*, 97.

14 Zaidi, "Akbar and the Rajput Principalities."

15 Ziegler, "Some Notes on Rajput Loyalties"; Sarkar, *History of Jaipur*, 104–8.

16 The court of Amber is sometimes also referred to as "Amber-Jaipur," acknowledging the current prominence of the city of Jaipur, where the courtly capital was moved during the reign of the Kachhwaha Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II.

17 Sarkar, *History of Jaipur*.

18 Zaidi, "Akbar and the Rajput Principalities"; Imam, "Institutionalizing *Rajadharma*," 40–41.

19 Imam, "Institutionalizing *Rajadharma*," 40–41.

20 Sreenivasan, "Rethinking Kingship and Authority," 555–56.

21 Imam, "Institutionalizing *Rajadharma*," 40–46.

22 Joffee, "Art, Architecture and Politics in Mewar"; Asher, "Mapping Hindu-Muslim Identities"; Talbot, "Justifying Defeat"; Talbot, "The Mewar Court's Construction of History."

23 Desai, "Painting and Politics."

24 Aitken, *Intelligence of Tradition*, 11–14, 22–26.

25 Aitken, "The Laud Rāgamālā Album."

26 On the use of the *jharokhā* in sub-imperial architecture, see Asher, "Sub-Imperial Palaces," 286–87.

27 Koch, "Baluster Column," 259.

28 Asher and Talbot, *India before Europe*, 211. See also Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India*, 248.

29 Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India*, 213. See also Asher, "Excavating Communalism," 228–29.

30 On Jai Singh's linguistic knowledge, see Asher, "Excavating Communalism," 223. On his patronage, see Busch, *Poetry of Kings*, 173–74.

31 Snell, *Hindi Classical Tradition*, 34.

32 Busch, "Portrait of a Raja," 319. On Man Singh's architectural patronage at Rohtas and an interpretation of his stone inscriptions proclaiming himself to be both a servant of Akbar (in Persian) and "king of kings, overlord" (in Sanskrit), see Asher, "Sub-Imperial Palaces," 286–87.

33 Chowdhury, "Imperial Mughal Tent."

34 Sreenivasan, "Rethinking Kingship and Authority," 573.

35 Kinra, *Writing Self, Writing Empire*, 109.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid., 110.

38 Ibid., 110–11.

39 Ibid., 128, 131.

40 Busch, "Listening for the Context," 259–60.

41 Ibid.; see also Roth, "Poppies and Peacocks," 57.

42 Busch, "Portrait of a Raja," 308.

43 Roth, "Poppies and Peacocks," 58.

44 Busch, "Portrait of a Raja," 309.

45 In Singh, *Textiles and Costumes*, xlv, fn. 9.

46 In Singh, *Textiles and Costumes*, xlv, fn. 10. Translated in conversation with Dr. Chandramani Singh, April 19, 2013.

47 Kothiyal, *Nomadic Narratives*.

48 Ibid., 150; Gupta, *Trade and Commerce in Rajasthan*, 90–91.

49 Gupta, *Trade and Commerce in Rajasthan*, 90–91.

50 Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*, 12–14.

51 Ibid., 13; see also Kane, "Mughal Indian Carpets," 2.

52 Singh, *Textiles and Costumes*. For a discussion of Singh and Smart's research,

see Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 14–15.

53 Smart, "Preliminary Report."

54 Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*.

55 Culin, "Story of the Painted Curtain," 142, 145. Quoted also in Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 41–42.

56 For a thorough introduction to the system of *kārkhāna*s, see Mishra, "Map and Map-Making"; Khan, *Art and Craft Workshops under the Mughals*.

57 Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 13.

58 Singh, *Textiles and Costumes*, x.

59 *Toshākhāna* Record, VS 1755–1756, Bundle 1, *Jaipur Kārkhāna Jamākharch Toshākhāna*, Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner (hereafter RSA).

60 Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 22. See also Salam, "Foundation and Early History of Jaipur City," 134–35; Asher, "Excavating Communalism," 231–32.

61 Steingass, *Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, 148, s.v. "bāfta."

62 Fotheringham, *Indian Textile Sourcebook*, 396.

63 Hugel, *Kashmir under Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, 75. Ellen Smart gives the length of a *gaz* as 67 centimeters or approximately 26 inches. See Smart, "Large, Complete Summer Carpet," 105. Earlier accounts gave the measurement of an Akbari-era *gaz* of cloth as 34½ inches. Prinsep and Prinsep, *Essays on Indian Antiquities*, 124.

64 Khan and Sarkar, *Maāsir-i-ʿĀlamgiri*, chap. 18; a gift to the emperor, for instance, would include a pearl necklace, a pearl cap, and five *thān* of cloth.

65 Shrivastav, *Madhya Pradesh District Gazetteers*, 310; blankets (*kambal*) and "piece goods" (*thān*) were sold by the unit.

66 In the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*, velvet from Europe is priced by the *gaz* at 1 to 4 mohurs (the most valuable gold coinage); the more valuable Persian velvet from Kashan, Yazd, and Mashhad is priced by the *thān* at 2 to 7 mohurs. See Abu'l Fazl, *Aín i Akbari* [English], 93.

67 According to Moti Chandra, *mahimūdīsāhī* was known in the Sultanate period as "the finest variety of muslin of Bengal origin, probably named after one of its rulers Jadu alias Muhammad Shah (1414–1431)." See Chandra, *Costume, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 159. Singh disagrees and believes that the *mahmudī* derived from Chanderi and was named not for Muhammad Shah of Bengal but Mahmud Khalji of the Malwa Sultanate (r. 1436–39). Singh, *Textiles and Costumes*, xii–xiii.

68 *Sūratkhāna* Record, VS 1759–1784, Bundle 1, *Jaipur Kārkhāna Jamākharch Sūratkhāna*, RSA.

69 On *chīnt*, see Crill, *Chintz*, 8–11; Smart, "Preliminary Report," 5.

70 *Toshākhāna* Record, VS 1755–1756, Bundle 1, *Jaipur Kārkhāna Jamākharch Toshākhāna*, RSA, 16.

71 Chandra, *Costume, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 161.

72 *Toshākhāna* Record, VS 1755–1756, Bundle 1, *Jaipur Kārkhāna Jamākharch Toshākhāna*, RSA, 21.

73 Rupert Snell renders the couplet as follows: "A woman's lustre limns those limbs / whose childish glow still shines: / a taffeta effulgence shows / in twinned and braided twines." See Snell, "Biharilal: Three Couplets from the *Satsaī*."

74 Ibid.; Singh, *Textiles and Costumes*, xix.

75 Singh, "Two Medieval Compositions on Indian Textiles."

76 Ibid., 180.

77 Singh writes that this manuscript was found in the Khas-Mohar Collection of the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum in Jaipur (Manuscript Number 2427).

78 Singh, "Two Medieval Compositions on Indian Textiles," 176.

79 Bahl, "Hindi 'Rīti' Tradition."

80 Singh, "Two Medieval Compositions on Indian Textiles," 176; Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 152. Chandra defines *varnaka*s as "stock lists of stuffs." For Gujarati *varnaka* texts from the fourteenth through eighteenth centuries, see Sandesara, *Varṇaka-Samuccaya*.

81 Singh, "Two Medieval Compositions on Indian Textiles," 177.

82 Ibid., 179.

83 Parimoo, "Uncovering the Meaning," 230.

84 Crill, *Chintz*, 9.

85 Singh, "Two Medieval Compositions on Indian Textiles," 180.

86 Cohen, "Materials and Making," 43. See also Houghteling, "Dyeing the Springtime."

87 Murphy and Crill, *Tie-Dyed Textiles of India*, 72–73; Houghteling, "Dyeing the Springtime."

88 Singh, "Two Medieval Compositions on Indian Textiles," 182.

89 Ibid., 179.

90 Ibid., 180 [Hindi], 182 [English].

91 Ibid., 181 [Hindi], 183 [English].

92 Ibid., 180 [Hindi], 182 [English]. Moti Chandra mentions a cloth called *manasasa* or *manasusa* that shares this prefix "*man-*": "Apparently it was a muslin of fine quality imparting 'pleasure to mind.'" Chandra, *Costumes, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure*, 160.

93 Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 272; Hayyim, *New Persian-English Dictionary*, 2:89, "sofreh, n."

94 Ellen Smart and Daniel Walker suggest that these *rūmāl*s were given with the scenes facing the recipient. See Smart and Walker, *Pride of the Princes*, 90, cited in Sardar, "Seventeenth-Century Kalamkari Hanging," 160n8.

95 Pritchett, *Romance Tradition in Urdu*, 15.

96 Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 60–61.

97 Ellen Smart, who was able to document the inscriptions before the Metropolitan Museum of Art covered them during conservation, generously gave me access to photographs of these inscriptions and translated and interpreted them with me (telephone conversation with Ellen S. Smart, November 5, 2013). For a full list of the dates, see Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 60.

98 Telephone conversation with Ellen S. Smart, November 5, 2013.

99 This cloth measures 198 in. (504 cm) × 196 1/16 in. (498 cm). See Smart, "A Large, Complete Summer Carpet," 104.

100 Sardar, "Seventeenth-Century Kalamkari Hanging."

101 On the trade connections between South and Southeast Asia, see Guy, *Woven Cargoes*, 54–151.

102 Mohanty and Krishna, *Ikat Fabrics of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh*; Crill, *Indian Ikat Textiles*.

103 For illustrations and descriptions of this style of dress, see Alkazi, *Medieval Indian Costume*, 279.

104 See, for example, Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India, 1500–1700*, 62; see illustration of *Vasanta Rāginī*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Acc. No. M.79.191.28 in Haidar and Sarkar, *Sultans of the South*, 87.

105 See illustration of *Yogini with a Mynah Bird* (Chester Beatty Library, Acc. No. In. 11A.31) in Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 98–99.

106 Ibid., 11; Eaton, *Social History of the Deccan*, 105–12; Eaton, *India in the Persianate Age*, 259–62.
107 Eaton, *Social History of the Deccan*, 110–12.
108 Aitken, "The Laud Rāgamālā Album," 50.
109 Dayal, "Making the 'Mughal' Soldier," 882–83.
110 Sreenivasan, "Drudges, Dancing Girls, Concubines," 142.
111 Ibid., 143–44. See also Joshi, *Polygamy and Purdah*.
112 See Natif, "The Generative Garden." See also Babayan and Najmabadi, *Islamicate Sexualities.*
113 Stewart, "In Search of Equivalence," 282. See also Orsini, "How to Do Multilingual Literary History?"
114 Glynn, "Evidence of Royal Painting."
115 Branfoot, *Portraiture in South Asia since the Mughals*, plate 11.
116 Although the faces are similar, I am grateful to Rosemary Crill for pointing out that the turbans that the figures wear are dissimilar.
117 Fischel, *Local States in an Imperial World*, 255–56.
118 Ibid., 15.
119 Sarkar, *History of Jaipur*, 104–8.
120 Gupta and Bakshi, *Rajasthan through the Ages*, 4:32.
121 Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 26.
122 Gupta and Bakshi, *Rajasthan through the Ages*, 4:77.
123 Ibid., 4:80.
124 For documenting and publishing these dates, I am indebted to Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*.
125 Sarkar, "Recall of Mirza Rajah Jai Singh and His Death," 174.
126 The dates are not only on cotton textiles in the collections but also on woolen knotted-pile carpets, suggesting a massive inventory effort on April 8, 1690. For the dated carpets, see Cohen, "Shaped Carpets of Amer," 55.
127 For a related discussion of the scale of the Mughal princely household, see Faruqui, *Princes of the Mughal Empire*, 88–89.
128 Tillotson, "Palaces of the Rajput Kings," 43–44.
129 Ibid., 51.
130 Ibid., 43.
131 Das, "Court Painting for the Amber Rulers," 43.
132 Bose, *Royal Umbrellas of Stone*, 41–43.
133 Das, "Court Painting for the Amber Rulers," 43–44.
134 Cimino, *Wall Paintings of Rajasthan*, 11.
135 Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 46.
136 The height of the Cooper Hewitt's velvet is 29 3/8 inches and the figures extend from the bottom to the top of the cloth.
137 Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 46. Jain notes that the high-quality velvets from Iran were worth 1,500 rupees, while the entire painted cycle of the Jaipur *Rāmāyana* was valued at 1,516 rupees in this period.
138 McWilliams, "Three Figural Velvets."
139 I am grateful to Steven Cohen for sharing his photographs and analysis of the textile formerly in the DeUnger/Keir Collection, and for his assessment of the possible dating of the ROM textile. Email communication with Steven Cohen, August 12, 2019.
140 McWilliams, "Three Figural Velvets," 24.
141 Ibid.
142 Asher, "Sub-Imperial Palaces," 286–87.
143 Biharilal, *Poems from the Satsai*, 63, verse 214.
144 Singh, *Textiles and Costumes*, xiv.
145 Tillotson, "Palaces of the Rajput Kings," 51.
146 Biharilal, *Poems from the Satsai*, 33, verse 108.
147 Gupta and Bakshi, *Rajasthan through the Ages*, 4:24; on the overuse of intoxicants in the Deccan, see Gupta, "Splendour of the City," 244–45.
148 Sarkar, *Military Despatches*, 63.
149 Aitken, "The Laud Rāgamālā Album," 52–53; Brown [Schofield], "If Music Be the Food of Love," 74.
150 Khera, "Joys of Bonding," 111.
151 Ibid., 114.
152 Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India*, 123–27.
153 Glynn, "Evidence of Royal Painting," 90.
154 Crill, *Fabric of India*, 123, 126–27; Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 54, 66, 68, 72.
155 Metsger, "The Flowers of Indo-European Chintz"; Krishna, "Flowers in Indian Textile Designs."
156 Koch, "Taj Mahal," 145; Skelton, "Decorative Motif in Mughal Art." See also Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*, 88.
157 Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*, 95, 100; Cohen, "Shaped Carpets of Amer." For pashmina carpets, see Cohen and Kajitani, *Gardens of Eternal Spring*.
158 Cohen, "Shaped Carpets of Amer," 60.
159 Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*, 100.
160 Cohen, "Safavid and Mughal Carpets," 82–83. Cohen suggests that this carpet may even have been stitched together from fragmentary pieces.
161 Serra and Nobre de Carvalho, *The Emperor's Flowers*.
162 Koch, "Jahangir as Francis Bacon's Ideal." Quote in the preface to Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*, v.
163 Goswamy et al., *Indian Costumes II*.
164 Rajora, "Movement, Vision and Landscape Experience," 1–10.
165 Plan of Amber Palace Complex, Amber Conservation and Development Report, M/s Minakshi Jain Architects, Ahmedabad, India, 2006, unpublished document.
166 Andrews, "The Generous Heart," 160.
167 Jain, *Textiles and Garments at the Jaipur Court*, 80.
168 Haidar, "Ramayana, with a Mughal Brush."
169 Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*, 103–5; Cohen, "Shaped Carpets of Amer," 60.
170 Thompson, "Shaped Carpets Found in the Jaipur Treasury"; Cohen, "Shaped Carpets of Amer," 52.
171 Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*, 118, 120.
172 Bergerson, "Representation," 320; see also Weigert, "Chambres d'amour," 329.
173 Packert, *Art of Loving Krishna*, 140.
174 Sarkar, *A History of Jaipur*, 18.
175 Packert, *Art of Loving Krishna*, 137; Asher, "Excavating Communalism," 234.
176 Krishna and Talwar, *In Adoration of Krishna*.
177 Mittal, "Gods of the Fabrics."
178 Lyons, *The Artists of Nathadwara*.
179 Mittal, "Gods of the Fabrics," 205.
180 Aitken, *Intelligence of Tradition*, 116.
181 Khera, *Place of Many Moods*.
182 Sachdev and Tillotson, *Building Jaipur*, 38.
183 Kamal, "Artisans and Craftsmen in 18th Century Jaipur," 39.
184 Crill, *Fabric of India*, 131; Crill, "Scenes from a Rajput Palace."

Chapter 4

1 Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, 362 [English]; Bernier, *Voyages*, 223 [French].
2 Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, 361 [English]; Bernier, *Voyages*, 222 [French].
3 Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, 270 [English]; Bernier, *Voyages*, 54 [French].
4 Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire*, 404 [English]; Bernier, *Voyages*, 281 [French].
5 Ahmad, *Hadiqat al-Salātīn*, 287–88.
6 Irwin, "Golconda Cotton Paintings," 14–17; Oliver, *Art, Trade, and Imperialism*, 49; Subrahmanyam, "Rural Industry," 86.

7 The name derives from "Chola" and "mandalam," meaning the circle of the Cholas, a medieval ruling dynasty.
8 Oliver, *Art, Trade, and Imperialism*, 39.
9 Crill, *Chintz*, 8–11.
10 In historical usage and present-day terminology, these distinctions between hand-painted and block-printed textiles have never been stable, and both in Iran and throughout South Asia, *chīnt* (or the Persian variant, *chīt*) and kalamkari (*qalamkārī*) have come to refer to both hand-painted and block-printed objects. Rajarshi Sengupta has shown that the overlap between these meanings of *qalamkārī* may derive from artisanal terminology: the word *qalam* is presently also applied to the tool used to carve the printers' blocks, a reminder that block-printing also emerges from a hand-drawn art of block carving. See Sengupta, "An Artisanal History of Kalam?"
11 Irwin, "Golconda Cotton Paintings," 11.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid., 12.
14 Sardar, "Seventeenth-Century Kalamkari Hanging."
15 Eighteenth-century records from Jaipur are remarkable in listing the names of not only painters but also dyers and embroiderers in the royal textile workshops. See Kamal, "Artisans and Craftsmen in 18th Century Jaipur"; Khan, *Art and Craft Workshops under the Mughals*.
16 Shekhar, "*Rawaih Gulshan i Qutbshahi*," 118.
17 Mitra, *Port Towns in Medieval India*, 146.
18 Haidar and Sarkar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 274.
19 Ramaswamy, *Textiles and Weavers*, 120–22.
20 Seshan, *Trade and Politics*, 42.
21 Raychaudhuri and Habib, *Cambridge Economic History of India*, 388.
22 Ibid., 391.
23 Quoted in Chaudhuri, *Trading World of Asia*, 116.
24 Ibid.
25 For an illuminating account of the process of European integration into the trade along the Coromandel Coast using European, Tamil, and Telugu sources, see Stephen, *Oceanscapes*, 51–189.
26 Kerlogue, "Early English Textile Trade"; Guy, *Woven Cargoes*.
27 For earlier histories of these trade relations, see Flatt, *Courts of the Deccan Sultanates*, 120–66.
28 Brennig, "Textile Trade of Seventeenth Century Northern Coromandel," 233, 247.
29 Mohanty and Chandramouli, *Natural Dyeing Processes of India*, 103; Fee, *Cloth That Changed the World*, 6–7; Cardon, "Colours of Chintz."
30 Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World*, 19–20; Crill, *Chintz*, 11–13. Crill notes that the red dye bath did not always precede the blue.
31 Cardon, "Colours of Chintz."
32 Fee, *Cloth That Changed the World*, 7.
33 Mittal, "Indian Painters as Designers," 249.
34 Wendt, "Social Fabric," 269.
35 Haidar and Sarkar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 276.
36 Fee, *Cloth That Changed the World*, 9.
37 Naqvi, *Urban Centres*, 161.
38 *Chayaver* is from the Tamil *chaya* for color and *ver* for root. Cecil, "Chay Red," 69. Taylor, "Red Dyes," 24. Taylor's analysis revealed that this cloth was dyed with chay root.
39 Gilbert and Cooke, "Dyes from Plants," 64.
40 Taylor, "Red Dyes"; Cardon, "Colours of Chintz."
41 Kharbade and Agrawal, "Analysis of Natural Dyes"; Cecil, "Chay Red"; Taylor, "Jouy Calico Print."
42 Crill, *Chintz*, 7–8; Cecil, "Chay Red."
43 Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, 96.
44 Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World*, 21; Cecil, "Chay Red," 69.
45 Irwin, "Indian Textile Trade: Coromandel Coast," 33.
46 Wendt, "The Social Fabric," 282.
47 Quoted in Crill, *Chintz*, 14.
48 Wendt, "The Social Fabric," 79.
49 Houghteling and Shibayama, "Tools of the Master Dyer," 20.
50 Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 285–86; Gupta, "Splendour of the City," 240–46.
51 Naqvi, "Colour Making and Dyeing," 61. A dye recipe for red Burhanpur *salu* cloths prescribes *āl* for the red color.
52 Foster, *English Factories in India, 1622–1623*, 104.
53 Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World*, 21; Cardon, *Natural Dyes*, 139.
54 Sengupta, "Performing Histories."
55 Ramaswamy, *Textiles and Weavers*, 120.
56 Parthasarathi, *Transition to a Colonial Economy*, 15.
57 Ibid., 29–30.
58 Ibid., 39.
59 Wendt, "The Social Fabric," 289.
60 Naqvi, *Urban Centres*, 158.
61 Ramaswamy, *Textiles and Weavers*, 121.
62 See Stephen, *Oceanscapes*, 7–9 on the history of weaver taxes in southeastern India.
63 Ramaswamy, *Textiles and Weavers*, 122.
64 Wendt, "The Social Fabric," 265.
65 Foster, *English Factories in India, 1624–1629*, 53.
66 Ibid., 135.
67 Ibid., 129.
68 Foster, *English Factories in India, 1630–1633*, 229, 244.
69 Foster, *English Factories in India*, *1642–1645*, 39.
70 Ibid., 46.
71 Foster, *English Factories in India, 1661–1664*, 58.
72 Ibid., 175.
73 Suggestion made in conversation with Jasleen Dhamija, January 2013.
74 Shibayama, Wypyski, and Gagliardi-Mangilli, "Analysis of Natural Dyes."
75 Habib, *Akbar and His India*, 133.
76 Ibid.
77 Cohen, "Deccani Carpets."
78 Foster, *English Factories in India, 1630–1633*, 146.
79 Raychaudhuri and Habib, *Cambridge Economic History of India*, 296; Prakash, "Dutch and English East India Companies." Prakash notes that the devastation of the famines led European companies to import more cloth from the Coromandel Coast than from Gujarat for the first time; quantities of Coromandel Coast cloth only became "significant" after 1646 (p. 188).
80 Barnes, Cohen, and Crill, *Trade, Temple & Court*.
81 Crill, *Fabric of India*, 156–57.
82 Barnes, *Indian Block-Printed Textiles in Egypt*.
83 Dallapiccola, *Kalamkari Temple Hangings*; Seastrand, "Wall Painting of South Asia and Allied Textile Traditions"; Crill, "Creating for India," 39–42; Houghteling, "Figural Textiles"; Guy and Thakar, *Indian Cotton Textiles*.
84 Gommans, "Cosmopolitanism and Imagination," 2; Pachner, "Paintings in the Temple of Virabhadra at Lepakshi"; Dallapiccola et al., *Lepakshi*.
85 Irwin, "Golconda Cotton Paintings," 26.
86 Hartkamp-Jonxis, "Going Ashore in Tranquebar."
87 Stephen, *Oceanscapes*, 51–115, 191–213.

88 Guy, "'One Thing Leads to Another,'" 26. See also Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World*, 155–65; Puckle, *Diary*, January 8, 1676, 65.
89 Brennig, "Chief Merchants."
90 Subrahmanyam, "Persians, Pilgrims and Portuguese," 525–29.
91 Irwin, "Indian Textile Trade: Coromandel Coast," 30.
92 Puckle, *Diary*, December 29, 1675, 59–60.
93 Subrahmanyam, "Iranians Abroad," 349.
94 Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, 96.
95 Subrahmanyam, "Persians, Pilgrims and Portuguese," 518–19.
96 Quoted in Seshan, *Trade and Politics*, 65.
97 Ibid.
98 Husain, *Selected Waqai*, [English] 3, [Persian] 4. See also Sengupta, "Performing Histories."
99 Husain, *Selected Waqai*, [English] 16, [Persian] 21.
100 Ibid., [English] 12, [Persian] 15.
101 Ibid., [English] v.
102 Crill, "Asia in Europe: Textiles for the West," 269. My thanks to Rosemary Crill for suggesting this source in the summer of 2012.
103 Puckle, *Diary*, July 28, 1675, 18.
104 Ibid., July 30, 1675, 18.
105 Ibid., October 29, 1675, 48.
106 Ibid., October 14, 1675, 44: "No bread to be bought for money, sold only to the Moores."
107 Ray, "French-Golconda Relation," 60.
108 Puckle, *Diary*, 38–39.
109 Ray, "French-Golconda Relation," 58; Gommans, *Unseen World*, 43–45.
110 Puckle, *Diary*, 63.
111 Irwin, "Origins of the 'Oriental Style.'"
112 Puckle, *Diary*, 441.
113 For an account of how stencils (*khākas*) were used in the production of paintings for the Bikaner court, see Aitken, "The Laud Rāgamālā Album," 30–32.
114 Havart, *Op-En Ondergang Van Cormandel*, 14. Quoted in Irwin, "Golconda Cotton Paintings," 21.
115 Havart, *Op-En Ondergang Van Cormandel*, 14.
116 Irwin, "Golconda Cotton Paintings," 43.
117 Losty, "Dating the Dara Shukuh Album," 280. For connections between floral fantasy paintings and the Coromandel Coast's tree-of-life kalamkari, see Houghteling, "Tree of Life."
118 Quoted in Irwin, "Indian Textile Trade: Coromandel Coast," 33.
119 Raj, *Relocating Modern Science*, 43–51; Oliver, *Art, Trade, and Imperialism*, 124–45.
120 Crill, *Chintz*, 29, 70–71.
121 Irwin and Brett, *Origins of Chintz*, 97.
122 Irwin, "Golconda Cotton Paintings," 24.
123 Sardar, "Seventeenth-Century Kalamkari Hanging," 154–60.
124 Quoted in Luther, *Hyderabad*, 52.
125 Moreland, *Relations of Golconda in the Early Seventeenth Century*, 55.
126 Overton, *Iran and the Deccan*, 31.
127 See Bawa, "Politics of Architecture," 333. Richard Eaton and Phillip Wagoner have traced other aspects of Hyderabad's layout to the Kakatiya city of Warangal. See Eaton and Wagoner, "Qutb Shahi Warangal and the Foundation of Hyderabad"; Eaton, *India in the Persianate Age*, 155–57.
128 Subrahmanyam, "Iranians Abroad."
129 Keelan Overton describes other examples of trade from the Deccan to Iran that also include metalwork. Overton, *Iran and the Deccan*, 35.
130 Matthee, "The Safavid Economy as Part of the World Economy," 38.
131 Quoted in Alpers, *Indian Ocean in World History*, 90.
132 Grube, "Wall Paintings in the Seventeenth Century Monuments of Isfahan," 515–18.
133 Sims, *Peerless Images*, 75.
134 Shekhar, "*Rawaih Gulshan i Qutbshahi*," 118.
135 Luther, *Hyderabad*, 50.
136 Quoted in Bawa, "Politics of Architecture," 333.
137 Ibid.
138 Babaie, *Isfahan and Its Palaces*, 10. See also 157–223.
139 Ibid., 11.
140 Ibid., 186.
141 Aitken, *Intelligence of Tradition*, 17–18.
142 Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, 161.
143 Schama, "Wives and Wantons," 8.
144 Ahmad, *Hadiqat al-Salātīn*, 60–61. I thank Behzad Borhan and Banafsheh Pourzangiabadi for their help in translating this passage. For discussions of other sections of this text, see Sardar, "Seventeenth-Century Kalamkari Hanging," 155–56 and Digby, "Literary Evidence for Painting."
145 A similar scene celebrating Rabiʿ al-Awwal is described in the *Tarikh-i Muhammad Qutb Shah*, an account of the reign of Muhammad Qutb Shah dating to 1617. See the translation by Maryam Ekhtiar in Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 344.
146 Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image*, 176n71.
147 Ahmad, *Hadiqat al-Salātīn*, 61.
148 Fischel, *Local States in an Imperial World*, 242–43.
149 Sharma, "City of Beauties"; Busch, "Portrait of a Raja," 308; Gupta, "Splendour of the City," 244.
150 Sharma, "City of Beauties."
151 Canby, "Farangi Saz"; on *firangī-sazī*, see Landau, "*Farangi-Sazi* at Isfahan"; on imagery of lapdogs in these paintings, see Babaie, "Visual Vestiges of Travel," 132–34.
152 Subtelny, "Zoroastrian Elements."
153 Shahbazi, "Nowruz ii: In the Islamic Period."
154 Gommans, *Unseen World*, 43–45; Kruijtzer, "Daniel Havart"; Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India*, 319.
155 Wickens, "Būstān."
156 Kruijtzer, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth-Century India*, 41–42.
157 Gommans, *Unseen World*, 47.
158 Seshan, *Trade and Politics*, 42.
159 Quoted in Irwin, "Indian Textile Trade: Coromandel Coast," 33.
160 Ibid.

Chapter 5

1 Crill, *Chintz*, 29.
2 Styles, "Fibres, Fabrics and Marketing," 35–42.
3 Beck, *Draper's Dictionary*, "cobweb lawn," 75 and "smoky lawn," 94.
4 Cary, *Discourse Concerning the East-India-Company Trade*, 4.
5 Hayward, *Stuart Style*; Lynn, *Tudor Fashion*, 132, 136.
6 Schrader, *Rembrandt and the Inspiration of India*.
7 I thank Marianne Hansen for first sharing this image with me.
8 Matthee, *Politics of Trade in Safavid Iran*, 79–83; Canby, *Shah ʿAbbas*, 56.
9 Alsteens, "A Portraitist's Progress," 17–18.
10 Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, 55–57.
11 Niayesh, "The Fabric of Silk Power."
12 Defoe, *Tour Thro' the Whole Island*, 122.
13 Ibid.
14 In Starr, "Defoe and China," 439.
15 Claxton, "Countess of Arundel's Dutch Pranketing Room."
16 Smith, *Eighteenth-Century Decoration*, 249–50.
17 Baarsen, "The Court Style in Holland," 17–19; Impey, *Porcelain for Palaces*.
18 See Brown, *Ends of Empire*, 1–22. For a specific discussion of porcelain, see

Kowaleski-Wallace, "Women, China, and Consumer Culture." See also Porter, "Monstrous Beauty," 406–9; Sloboda, *Chinoiserie*.

19 Weichel, "'Every Other Place,'" 47.

20 Hinton, *Kensington Palace*; Lane, "Queen Mary II's Porcelain Collection."

21 Quoted in Davis, *Art of Crewel Embroidery*, 27.

22 Defoe, *Tour Thro' the Whole Island*, 7.

23 I have also discussed this material in Houghteling, "Chintz in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Europe" and "From Foot-Cloth to Petticoat" and am grateful for permission to include it here.

24 Quoted in Irwin, "Indian Textile Trade: Foreign Influence," 58.

25 Brennig, "Textile Trade of Seventeenth Century Northern Coromandel," 44–45.

26 See Riello and Roy, *How India Clothed the World*; Riello and Parthasarathi, *Spinning World*.

27 Historians are correct to focus on questions of utility because the majority of the cloth exported from South Asia consisted of plain white fabric, or fabric with simple striped or checked patterns, that was shipped in bales to Europe. Some was reexported to Africa and the New World. The rarer painted cottons, called chintz, were more valuable and were shipped in specially made chests from India's Coromandel Coast to ports in Europe. Brennig, "Textile Trade of Seventeenth Century Northern Coromandel," 47.

28 Mukerji, *From Graven Images*, 197.

29 Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories," 737.

30 Hunt and Jacob, *Bernard Picart*; Bleichmar and Mancall, *Collecting across Cultures*; Mason, "Dragon Tree." For accounts of non-European travel and discovery, see Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*; Chatterjee and Hawes, *Europe Observed*.

31 For a critique of the gendered use of the word "craze," see Sloboda, *Chinoiserie*, 10. As historian John Styles has argued, the British adopted Indian cotton because it was easy to wash, it was breathable, and the bright dyes on the cotton would never wash away. Styles, *Dress of the People*, 114.

32 Huet, *Memoirs of the Dutch Trade*, 137.

33 On the practice of writing "entangled histories," see Werner and Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison." Also Fee, "Entangled Histories."

34 Lemire, "Domesticating the Exotic," 67–68.

35 Synge, *Art of Embroidery*, 146; Brett, *English Embroidery*, 43.

36 For later European examples of appliqué in the context of South Asian painted cottons, see Houghteling, "Chintz in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Europe."

37 Evelyn, *Diary*, 406.

38 Parker, *Subversive Stitch*; and, more recently, Classen, "Feminine Tactics."

39 Goggin and Tobin, *Women and Things*; Goggin and Tobin, *Women and the Material Culture*.

40 Fenetaux, "Female Crafts," 104.

41 See also Dias and Smith, *British Women and Cultural Practices*.

42 Subrahmanyam, *Europe's India*, 18–19.

43 Levey, "Embroidery, Renaissance to Rococo," 15.

44 Appliqué techniques were used with "rich woven fabrics," velvet, or "less valuable materials." Ibid.

45 Houghteling, "'From Scorching Spain,'" 16 (reproduced with permission of Taylor and Francis Group LLC through PLSclear).

46 Levey, *Embroideries at Hardwick Hall*, 58–179.

47 Nevinson, "English Domestic Embroidery Patterns," 2.

48 Levey, *Elizabethan Treasures*, fig. 69.

49 Sardar, "Seventeenth-Century Kalamkari Hanging," 149, 154.

50 Dye, *Arts of India*, 466. In the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts' description of this work, its appliqué work is not identified as having been of British or European origin.

51 For other examples, see Houghteling, "Chintz in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Europe."

52 Dye, *Arts of India*, 466.

53 See Labson and Morrall, "Panel with Two Ladies."

54 Brett, *English Embroidery*, 43; Synge, *Art of Embroidery*, 146. See also Houghteling, "Origins in Entanglement."

55 Fiennes, *Through England on a Side Saddle*, 305.

56 A. F. Kendrick describes English embroidery of the early seventeenth century as characterized by a "wide ornamental framework enclosing flowers and fruit" (*English Needlework*, 70). Lanto Synge contrasts the later style with "earlier crewelwork curtains embroidered in the tradition of blackwork [which] had a single overall pattern, usually of leaves, endlessly repeated over the fabric" (*Art of Embroidery*, 148).

57 Rowe, "Crewel Embroidered Bed Hangings," 111.

58 Nevinson, *Victoria & Albert Museum Catalogue*, 59; Hughes, *English Domestic Embroidery*; Davis, *Art of Crewel Embroidery*, 19; Irwin, "Origins of the 'Oriental Style'"; Kendrick, *English Needlework*, 138.

59 Houghteling, "Origins in Entanglement."

60 Nevinson, *Victoria & Albert Museum Catalogue*, 68.

61 Hartkamp-Jonxis, "Cat. 62: Palampore, Coromandel Coast," 216; Hartkamp-Jonxis, *Sits: Oost-West Relaties in Textiel*, 86–87.

62 Brett, "Variants of the Flowering Tree," 281; Irwin, "Origins of the 'Oriental Style,'" 113.

63 Brett, *English Embroidery*, 45; Irwin, "Origins of the 'Oriental Style,'" 110; Irwin and Brett, *Origins of Chintz*, 19–20.

64 Synge, *Art of Embroidery*, 147.

65 Wearden, "Saz Style"; Denny, "Dating Ottoman Turkish Works." See also Houghteling, "Tree of Life."

66 British embroiderers were not the only needleworkers to translate designs from painted cotton textiles into stitched works. Yumiko Kamada has also attributed to the Deccan a group of silk embroideries resembling flowered kalamkari textiles. See Kamada, "Attribution and Circulation."

67 Brooks, *English Embroideries*, 13–14.

68 Houghteling, "'From Scorching Spain,'" 16 (reproduced with permission of Taylor and Francis Group LLC through PLSclear).

69 For an example of an embroidery replicating the effects of a linen damask, see Wace, "Embroidery in the Collection." Houghteling, "'From Scorching Spain,'" 13–14 (reproduced with permission of Taylor and Francis Group LLC through PLSclear).

70 Crill, "Earliest Survivors."

71 Houghteling, "'From Scorching Spain,'" 16 (reproduced with permission of Taylor and Francis Group LLC through PLSclear).

72 Fiennes, *Through England on a Side Saddle*, 236, 305.

73 Brett, *English Embroidery*, 43; on chain stitch used in South Asian textiles, see Crill, *Indian Embroidery*, 7–9; Morrell, *Indian Embroidery*.

74 Synge, *Art of Embroidery*, 148.

75 I am very grateful to Ruth Barnes for pointing out the prevalence of juxtapositions of pink and red in South Asian chintz that can also be found in the crewelwork embroideries.
76 Kendrick writes that the "Oriental"-style crewelwork curtains and bed hangings were stitched on a light-colored ground "invariably of a twill weave with linen warps and cotton wefts" (*English Needlework*, 137).
77 Philip Sykas writes, however, that the exact meaning of the word "fustian" in historical records is "even more confused" than most textile terms ("Fustians in Englishmen's Dress," 1).
78 Brett, *English Embroidery*, 43.
79 Schneider, "Rumpelstiltskin's Bargain," 180–81.
80 Mazzaoui, *Italian Cotton Industry*, 28–56, 129–53; Ulrich, "From Fustian to Merino," 222; Sykas, "Fustians in Englishmen's Dress," 2; Synge, *Art of Embroidery*, 146.
81 On Gaspar Fagel's collection, see Hartog and Teune, "Gaspar Fagel," 200–201.
82 Woudstra, "Re-Instatement of the Greenhouse Quarter," 81; Woudstra, "Use of Flowering Plants."
83 Woudstra, "Re-Instatement of the Greenhouse Quarter," 82.
84 Quoted in ibid., 81.
85 For the German and Italian case, see Keating and Markey, "'Indian' Objects."
86 Woudstra, "The Re-Instatement of the Greenhouse Quarter," 94.
87 Ibid., 108n8.
88 Lemire, "Domesticating the Exotic," 69.
89 Ibid., 78.
90 Raj, *Relocating Modern Science*, 40–51; Oliver, *Art, Trade, and Imperialism*, 124–45.
91 Fiennes, *Through England on a Side Saddle*, 238.
92 Riello, "Asian Knowledge," 22; Raveux, "Birth of a New European Industry."
93 Taylor, "Jouy Calico Print"; Nesbitt, "Indian Dyes and Textiles."
94 Quoted in Cecil, "Chay Red," 71.

Conclusion

1 Parthasarathi, *Transition to a Colonial Economy*; Hossain, *Company Weavers of Bengal*; Swarnalatha, *World of the Weaver*.
2 Alam, *Crisis of Empire in Mughal North India*; Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen, and Bazaars*; McLane, *Land and Local Kingship*; Barnett, *North India between Empires*; Wink, *Land and Sovereignty in India*.
3 Sahai, "Crafts and Statecraft"; Sachdev and Tillotson, *Building Jaipur*; Markel and Gude, *India's Fabled City*; Chatterjee, *Merchants, Politics, and Society*; Chatterjee, "Trade and Darbar Politics."
4 Habib, "Indian Textile Industry," 185.
5 Parthasarathi, *Transition to a Colonial Economy*, 29–31; Ramaswamy, "Silk and Weavers of Silk."
6 Cohen, "Deccani Carpets."
7 Habib, "Introduction," xi. In this account of Tipu Sultan's envoy's travels to the Ottoman Empire between 1785 and 1787, Tipu Sultan instructs his emissaries that in addition to looking for glass, chinaware, mirrors, and saffron, they should also "obtain silkworms and their eggs from Qishm Island (off the coast of Iran) and send them to Seringapatam, including a few men acquainted with the art of rearing of them" (15).
8 Bean, *Yankee India*, 74–76; Peck, "'India Chints' and 'China Taffaty'"; Rauser, *Age of Undress*.
9 Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 98–105.
10 James Hargreaves's Spinning Jenny of 1764 and Richard Arkwright's 1769 water-driven spinning frame led to the establishment of the first spinning mills. John Kay's flying shuttle increased the productivity of loom weaving. In 1785, Edmund Cartwright invented the first mechanically powered loom. Eli Whitney's cotton gin of 1793 decreased the labor involved in removing the seeds from cotton.
11 See Forty, *Objects of Desire*, 50–51.
12 Emptoz, "Chimie des Colorants."
13 Cited in Watt, "'Whims and Fancies,'" 102.
14 Bayly, "Origins of Swadeshi," 307.
15 Roy, *Artisans and Industrialization*, 11.
16 Roy, "Economic Drain."
17 Swallow, "India Museum and the British-Indian Textile Trade," 35.
18 King, *Silk and Empire*.
19 Gupta, *Contesting Conservation*, 55.
20 Dejung, "Boundaries of Western Power," 135.
21 Satya, *Cotton and Famine in Berar*.
22 Prasad, "Suicide Deaths."
23 Bayly, "Origins of Swadeshi," 309.
24 Bean, "Gandhi and Khadi"; Brown, "Spinning without Touching the Wheel"; Chakrabarty, "Clothing the Political Man"; Eaton, "Swadeshi Color"; Tarlo, "Problem of What to Wear."
25 Trivedi, *Clothing Gandhi's Nation*.
26 Tarlo, *Clothing Matters*, 104–7.
27 Prasad, "Suicide Deaths."
28 Gandhi, *Charkha Shastra*, 12.
29 Ibid., 45.
30 Ibid., 9–10.
31 Abu'l Fazl, *Ain i Akbari* [English], 91.
32 Gandhi, *Charkha Shastra*, 32.
33 Ibid., 32–33.

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Note: Page numbers in italics refer to figures and captions.

A

ʿAbbas I, Shah, 38, 82, 190, 192
ʿAbd al-Hamid Lahori, *Pādshāhnāma*, 131
ʿAbd al-Rahim Khān-i-Khānān, 99, 127, 138, 165
ʿAbdi Bey Shirazi, *Jannat-i ʿAdn*, 226n83
Abdullah Qutb Shah, Sultan, 170–71
Abu'l Fazl, 33, 44, 50, 64, 77, 83, 230n61; on Akbar's air cooling, 61–62; on Akbar's divinity, 51–52; as Akbar's historian, 28, 32. See also *Aʾīn-i Akbarī* (*Institutes of Akbar*)
Abu'l Hasan, 156
activism of artisans, 163, 165
Adham Khan, foster brother of Akbar, 52, *54*, 55, *55*
aesthetics, 18, 83, 130, 146, 177, 196; of Amber court, 111, 147; of cosmopolitanism, 130, 148–50; Mughal, 105, 110, 149; of textiles, 10, 15–16, 17, 211
Afghanistan, 68, 112, 128, 131, 133
Africa, Africans, 1, 17, 22, 25, 112, 126, 208, 211, 213, 236n27; eastern, 11, 14, 22
agency, 4, 195, 197, 212
Agra, 32, 33, 144, 148, 156, 162, 209; imperial court at, 12, 28, 30, 42, 74, 96, 108, 110, 131; textiles and, 116, 211
Ahmadnagar sultanate, 156
Ahmedabad, 10, 33, 141, 144
Ahom dynasty, 39, 131
Aʾīn-i Akbarī (*Institutes of Akbar*), 30, 32, 69, 83, 112, 119, 137, 226n11; air cooling in, 61–62; Akbar's wardrobe in, 48, 64–65; cotton textiles in, 50; descriptive lists in, 28, 29; Gujarati luxury fabrics in, 33, 41; prices in, 226n6, 232n66; woolens listed in, 43, 44
air cooling, 61–62
Aitken, Molly, 99, 178
Ajmer, artisans from, 148
Akbar, Emperor, 11, 19, 20, 30, 37, 42, 62, 80, 81, 102, 165, 209, 215, 228n165; Adham Khan killed by, 52, *54*, 55, *55*; court of, 33, 51, 52, 64; experiments with air cooling, 61–62; family of, 39, 59, 109; gifts and, 50, 71; literature and, 28, 56; paintings of, 52, *53–55*, 87, *87*, 90–91, *91*; as political leader, 23, 28, 68; Rai Singh and, 71, 96–97; style and, 44, 65, 66, 68, 134; textiles and, 37, 48, 66, 83; wardrobe of, 28, 41, 45, 48, 51–55, *55*, 69
Akbarnāma, 62, 96, 228n165, 230n61; paintings from, 28, 65–68
akhlāq genre, 51
Akhlāq-i Nāsirī (Nasir al-Din Tusi), 51
Alam, Muzaffar, 23
ʿAlamgir, Emperor, 11, 115, 131, 151, 156, 212, 228n181; Kachhwaha rulers and, 109, 138
alchemy, alchemists, 69, 162, 188, 229nn187
āl dye (Indian mulberry; *Morinda citrifolia*), 160
Aleppo, 38
Ali, Daud, 19
ʿAli ʿAdil Shah (ruler of Bijapur), 171
Aligarh Muslim University, "Aligarh School" of historiography and, 15
alizarin, 160, 213
alum mordants, *158*, 159, 162, 185
Amber (Amer), 105, 110, 131, 133, 231n6; regional history of, 109–12; textiles in, 107, 109, 211
Amber court, 66, 81, 82, 112, 115, 121, 147, 148, 231n16; as Amber-Jaipur court, 113, 114, 117, 199, 212; scenes of life at, *128*, 129
Amber Fort, 108, 114, *132*, 148
Amber Palace, *107*, 108–9, 114, *132*, 134, 145; architecture of, 110, 130, *133*, 137, *138*, 146; carpets in, 142, 146; ceremonies and ritual space in, 121, 145, 149; pleasure pavilions of, 139
Amber textile collection, 24, 106, 111, 147, 152, 175, 212; inventory lists of, 113–16; meanings of, 109; poetry and, 116–20; provenance of, 107, 141; workshops and storage facilities (*kārkhānas*) of, 114–16, 121, 131
Amer. *See "Amber" entries*
Amir Khusrau, 60, 92, 94
Amrit Rai, poetry of, 112, 118, 143
Amritsar, Treaty of, 214
Andhra Pradesh, 168, 215
angarkhā (upper garment), 100–101
aniline dyes, 213
animal imagery, 36, 134; mythological, 175, 180. *See also names of types of animals*
Anooshahr, Ali, 80, 229n41
antariya (lower garment), 123
antelopes, 44, 90
anticolonialism, 214
appliqué, 185, 197–200, 209. *See also "embroidery" entries*
Arabian Peninsula, 1. *See also* Middle East
Arabic language, 36, 111; poetry in, 20, 88; textile terms in, 32, 44, 75
Aravalli Hills, 133
architecture, 9, 12, 16–17, 31, 109, 182; of Amber Palace, 110, 130, *133*, 137, 146; Deccani, 139, 185; of Hyderabad, 177–78; Mughal, 107, 111, 231n10; Rajput, 15–16, 111, 133
Arkwright, Richard, 237n10
Armagaon, 163
Armenia, 92; dyers from, 209; merchants from, 170, 173
art history, 10, 15, 16, 25; global, 224n13; Islamic, 17. *See also* historiography
artisans, 1, 4, 156, 170, 176, 212; activism of, 163, 165; Europeans and, 157, 162, 172; exploitation and enslavement of, 25; Gujarati, 166–67; mobility and movement of, 24, 148, 154, 162–68, 183, 212; Persian, 165–66

art of cloth: ecology and, 215; in Hindustan, 9–10; historiography of, 16–17; meanings of, 9; Mughal Empire and, 17, 25; in Rajasthan, 106; sense of place in, 28
Asaf Jah, 212
Asaf Khan, *95*
Asher, Catherine, 110, 231n32
Asif, Manan Ahmed, 4, 9
Assam, 12, 131, 224n28; silks and silk weaving of, 32, 33, *33*, 41, 227n75; wild silk of, 37, 39, 214
assassinations, 94, 96
atlas (satin), 31, 32, 36, 43, 119, 178
atlas silkworm and moth (*Attacus atlas*), 39, *39*
āūchīyū cloth, 37
Aurangabad, 81
Aurangzeb. *See* ʿAlamgir
Awadh, 212
Azim Khan, 68, *68*

B

Babaie, Sussan, 178
Babur, Emperor, 11, 42, 43, 48, 91, 225n37
Bāburnāma, as Babur's autobiography, 42
back-stitching, 206
bāfta (woven cloth), 79, 115
Bairat pavilion, 134, *134*
Bakāsura, *33*
Balkh, 12, 112, 209
bamboo, 46, 61, 62, 81; pens of, 154, *154*, 185; storage tubes (*nalwās*) of, 81
Bana (poet), 60
Banarasidas, 42
Bandar Abbas, 177
bandhanī (tie-dyed cotton cloth), *22–23*, 65–66, 68, 123, 211, 226n86
Bangladesh, 9, *9*, *47*, *212*. *See also* Bengal; Dhaka
banners, ceremonial, *166–67*
Bantam, 170
Banwari Das, 82
Barbakabad, sarkār of, 50
bare skin and body, 51, 64; in Mughal paintings, 52, *52*; portrayal of female, 190, *190*
Batavia, 1. *See also* Jakarta
baths: dye, 158–59, 207, 234n30; Turkish-style, 145
batting, 200
Baxandall, Michael, 28
Bayly, C. A., 15, 64, 68, 214–15
bazaars and markets: of Amber, 24, 42, 112, 183
Baz Bahadur, 66
bed hangings, 185, 197, 200, 202, *202*
bedspreads and coverlets, *41*, *175*, *199*, *206*, 230n61
Benares, 131
Bengal, 37, 47, 64, 65, 82, 110, 146, 160, 171, 212, 232n67; fine cotton muslin cloths of, 9, 31, 39, 46, 61, 113, 116, 144, 189, *206*, 211, 232n67; governor of, 78, 79; independent sultan of, 62, 229n41; textiles from, 36, 37, 111, 206. *See also* Bangladesh; Dhaka
Bengali language, 50, 227n73
Bernier, François, 151, 154
Bess of Hardwick, 198–99, 206
Bhagwan Das, 82
bhakti poetry, 117
Bhau Singh (son of Raja Man Singh), 138
Bichitr, *45*, 60, *60*, 94; paintings by, 92, *92*, *95*, 105, *105*
Bihar, 39
Biharilal, 116–17, 137; poetry of, 118, 138, 232n73; *Satsaī*, 111, 116–17, 128
Bijapur, 131, 132, 138, 171, 231n113; sultanate of, 48, 131, 156
Bikaner, 71, 96, 110; Rajasthan State Archives in, 114; royal family of, 74, 97
Bikaner robe of honor, *72–73*, *86*, 90, *98*, 100, *102*, 108; figural images on, 74, 84–85, *85*, 135; inscriptions on, 86, 101; letter accompanying, 80; Rai Singh and, 96; Safavid figural cloth of, 82, 106; as rare surviving early Mughal garment, 71; tailoring of, 99–100
bird imagery, 28, 92, 202; in Amber Palace murals, 134; *fākhta* dove, 27; falcons, *88*, *92*, 182; hawks, 79; merlins, 21–22, *22*, 226n86; mythological, 159; in paintings, 88–89, 92, *93*
Bishan Singh, Raja (ruler of Amber), 131, 133
blankets, 42
bleaching, bleachers, 24, 48, 69, 148, 155, 162, 172; of cotton cloth, 157, 158
Blochmann, Henry, 91, 227n73
block-printing, 148, 154, 166, 212, 234n10
blouses, 59, 120, 123, 128, 199. See also *cholī* blouses; *kanchukī* blouses
Bombyx mori silk and silkworm, 37, 39, 41. *See also* mulberry silk production
boots, 17, 90, 91
bouclé, silver, *137*
bracelets, 61
Brahmans, 112
Brahmaputra River, 46, 50
Braj Bhasha, 111, 226n11, 227n83
brass rings, 107, *107*, 145
Brazil, 207
Brett, Katharine, 203, 207
Bridges, Shem, 163
Brisman, Shira, 229n47
Britain (British Isles), 19; Asian exports to, 194–95; chintz trade and, 195–97; cloth manufacturing in, 196, 213; cloth trade with South Asia, 4, 24, 25, 160, 185, 212; female needleworkers in, 195, 197, 200, 204, 206, 236n56, 236n66; South Asian textiles in, 185–209; traders from, 1, 43, 156; Treaty of Amritsar with, 214
British Empire, 25, 197, 213, 214. *See also* colonization and colonialism; imperialism
brocade, brocades, 31, 60, *86*, 206, 230n61; gold, 48, 62
Brooklyn Museum: curator of, 113–14; hangings from the collection of, 1, *2–3*, 4, 168, 224n1
Buckler, F. W., 229n28
Buddhism, 29, 183
buffalo milk, 157
Bukainagar, 79
Bukhara, 31, 131
Bundi court, 148
Burhanpur, 131, 132, 171, 227n73, 234n51; floral textiles of, 155, 160–61, *161*
Bursa, 33, 38
Busch, Allison, 112, 226n11
Bush, Olga, 20
Būstān (Saʿdi), 182

C

calcium, 158
calico, calicoes, 177, 194, 196
Calico Museum of Textiles (Ahmedabad), 10, 141, 145
camels, 44, 171, 177
Canby, Sheila, 87
canopy, canopies, *4*, 21, *30*, 31, 32, 105, 145, 171
capitalist exploitation, 25, 214
caps, 85, 137, 225n37, 232n64. *See also* hats
caravans, 38, 157
caravanserai, 176
carding, 39, 214, 215
carpets, 12, 14, 32, 62, 103, 107, 112, *113*, 120–21, 131, 165, 206, 226n18, 230nn61, 86; in Amber, 106, 112, 142–46, 212; from Iran, 31, 56; knotted-pile, 113, 130, 141, *142*, 144, 212, 233n126; monumental, 9, 146, 212; shaped, 146, *146*; woolen, 17, 43, 130, 144, 233n126. *See also* floor coverings; floor-spreads, cotton
Cartwright, Edmund, 237n10
cashmere, 44. *See also "pashmina" entries*
Caspian provinces of Safavid Empire, 38
castes, 127
castor oil plant, 39
Cazim, Muhammad, 41, 227n75
ceilings, *134*, 145, 168, *168*
Central Asia, 1, 12, 14, 25, 32, 43, 68, 91, 212; first Mughal rulers from, 11, *12*, 48
chain stitching, *148*, *202*, 206, 207
chākdar jāma, 48, 64, 98
chalavalīyā cloth, 37
champa tree (*Michelia champaca*), 39
Chanderi: *do dāmī* fabric of, 66, 68; as source of *mahmudī* muslin, 116, 232n67
Chandra, Moti, 10, 37, 59, 226n37, 232nn67, 92
Changpa pastoralists, 44
chapān (long coat), 48
Chārkha Shāstra (Maganlal Gandhi), 215–16
Charles I, King, 175
Charles II, King, 175
charqab (Timurid-style coat), 78
chaudānī pattern, 35
chaulahirā cloth, 36. See also *lahariyā* patterned textiles

chay root (*Oldenlandia umbellata*), 213, 234n38; as red dye, 19, 160, *160*, 185, 209; trade of, 160–61
cheetahs, 80–81
Chehel Soutun, 177
chevron patterns, 35, 36
chikankarī embroidery, 115
children and infants, 19, 51, 114; dress of, 1, *7*, *18*
China, 46; exports from, 31, 36, 176–77; mulberry silk production in, 37, 41
Chinese porcelain, 194, 196, 237n7
chinoiserie imagery, 25
chīnt (patterned cotton textile), 36, 39, 64, 115–16, 118, 212, 234n10; in poetry, 119–20, 139. *See also* Machilipatnam hand-painted *chīnt* cloth
chintz, 115, 151, 154, 165, 185; in era of William and Mary, 194–95; motifs in, 197, 202, 209; trade of, 1, 188, 194, 195–97
chiru (Tibetan antelope; *Pantholops hodgsonii*), 44
cholī blouses, *58*, 59, 123
Chowdhury, Zirwat, 111
Christianity, 92
Cincinnati Art Museum, 128
cinnamon, 207
Circassians, 112
citrus fruit, 112, 157, 162
Cleveland Museum of Art, 230n105
climate and weather, 43, 162, 211, 214
cloth, 9, 59; bodily pleasures and, 60–61; communication and, 74, 80–82; decorative, 31, 32; landscape of, 23, 27–69; patronage of, 24; place and, 17, 28; sensory histories of, 17–22; temporality and, 16–17; types of, 28, 36–37. *See also* art of cloth; clothing, clothes; textiles; *and "textile" entries and names of individual types of cloth*
clothing, clothes, 1, 9, 29, 131; of Akbar, 52, *53*, *54*, 55, *55*; plasticity of, 16; scents of, 29–30; styles of, 14; swapping of, 64. *See also names of individual articles of clothing*
coats and cloaks, 74, 89, *89*
coffee, 196
Cohen, Steven, 10, 65–66, 233n160
collectors of South Asian textiles, 113, 114, 224n1. *See also* museums
colonization and colonialism, 156, 213, 214, 222. *See also* anticolonialism; British Empire; imperialism
color, colors, 28, 32, 37, 43, 64, 98, 134, 141, 154, 226n4, 226n8; black, 21, 37, 60, 64, 66, 85, 94, 137, 157–58, 167, 198, 236n56; blue, blues, 19, 21, 27, 35, 90, 91, 127, 139, 141, 142, 144, 149, 158, 165–68, 180, 183, 185, 189, 199, 204, 207; bright, 35, 68, 158; brown, browns, 21, 39, 43, 64, 90, 92, 126, 139, 143, 159, 172, 181, 183, 204; contrasting, 92, *92*; of cottons, 46, 48, 154; of dyes, 16, 19, 36, 43, 68–69, 159; of embroidery, 149, 207; of garments, 21, 56; gray, grays, 27, 55, 77, 92, 126; green, greens, 27, 48, 89, 90, 92, 126, 134, 139, 141, 143, 159, 204, 207, 215; orange, oranges, 27, 35, 50, 69, 90, 92, 98, 137, 143, 159; perishability of, 19–20, 69; pink, pinks, 19, 36, 69, 90, 92, 123, 126, 149, 158, 165, 166, 180, 203, 207, 215, 237n75; purples and violet, 55, 82, 129, 144, 158, 159, 160, 166, 183, 185; of silk, 39, 41, 51; yellow, yellows, 19, 21, 22, 35, 39, 48, 134, 139, 143, 157–59, 207, 215, 226n85. *See also* dyestuffs, dyes; red, reds; white, whiteness; *and names of individual dyes and dyestuffs*
commodities, textiles as, 14–16, 120
communication, 94, 118, 173, 200; aesthetic, 17, 106; cloth and clothing as, 9, 71, 74, 75, 81, 102; letter-writing as, 80, 82; social, 76
concubines, 128
consumption, consumers, 14, 25, 28, 195, 197, 211; desire and, 154, 165; European, 10, 196; Persian, 170, 177
Coromandel Coast, 25, 160, 168, 176, 182, 234n7; artisans of, 154, 212; European traders along, 156–57, 163; figural and floral textiles of, 155, 177, 234n7; painted and printed cloths made along, 24, 39, 166, 182
cosmopolitanism, 4, 14, 154, 180, 183; aesthetics of, 130, 148–50; of Amber principality, 106, 108; of court life, 31, 144; regionalism and, 25, 106, 185
cotton, raw, 33, 35, *35*, 157, 214; long-staple, 201; short-staple, 28, 46, 215; sound of, 215–16
cotton cloth, cloths, 1, 9, 15, 28, 42, 48, 51, 69, 109, 130; advantages of, 1, 61, 236n31; export trade of, 10, 14–15, 39; as fabric of compromise, 50–59; fine, 9, 37, 46–50, 211; letters written on, 81–82, 82; local traditions of, 32; painted, *2–3*, *4*, *5*, *6*, *113*, 123, 145, 154–55, 202, 211–12, 236n27; pleasures of, 59–62; tie-dyed, 36, 65
cotton gin, 213, 214, 237n10
cotton production, 15, 215; in Britain, 213
courtly culture: fashion and, 14, 32, 33, *34*, 35; of Mughal Empire, 19; politics and, 111; textiles in, 28–32; women and, *26*, *58*, 59
courtyards of Amber Palace, 130, *133*, 134, 137, 145–46
coverlets and bedspreads, *40*, *41*, *175*, *199*, *206*, 230n61
crewelwork, 197, 207, 212, 237n75; bed hangings of, 202–3, 237n76; of British women, 201; curtains of, 204, 236n56, 237n76
Crill, Rosemary, 10, 148, 206
Culin, Stewart, 113, 224n1
culture and cultural history, 10, 14–15, 18, 50, 110, 111, 185, 196; of Mughal court, 19, 99
curators, museum, 10, 113
curtains, 31, 32, 74, 100, 145, 178, 204, 236n56, 237n76

D

Dadlani, Chanchal, 107, 228n181, 231n10
daggers as part of robes of honor, 75
dāk-chaukī (Mughal postal system), 81
Dale, Stephen, 46
Danish traders, 156, 168
Dara Shukoh, 131, 225n69, 226n18; drawn by Rembrandt, 189, *189*
Das, Asok Kumar, 134
dating systems, 114
Daʿud Khan Karrani, 102; robe of honor given to, *61*, 62, *62*, *63*, 74
Debring, Rupshu, Eastern Ladakh, *44*
Deccan, the, 20–22, 31, 77, 97, *100*, 112–13, 119, 121, 126, 130, 144, 165–66, 171, 177; art and architecture in, 123, 139; cloth of, 111, 116, 133, 177, 236n66; mangos from, 69, 209; Mughal Empire and, 11, 12, 78, 96, 131; trade and, 4, 156–57, 171, 235n129
Deccani courts, 14; garments of, 48, *48*, *49*, 185; race and, 127; records of, 152
decoration, meaning of, 25
decorative arts, 25; textiles and, 16, 24
Defoe, Daniel, 194–95, 196, 208
Delhi, 11, 19, 81, 113, 116, 148, 151, 156, 209; imperial court at, 12, 110
Denmark, 156, 168
Devereux, Robert, second Earl of Essex, 190
Dhaka, Bengal (Bangladesh), 46, *47*, 50; muslin cloth of, *8–9*, 9, 116, *212*, 214
Dhamija, Jasleen, 10, 165, 234n73
dhobī, *dhobīs*, 162, 215. *See also* washers
dhobī's earth, 162
dhoti (lower garment), 48
dhūp-chāh (taffeta), 117
Digambara Jainism, 59
Dipalpur, *68*
dissolution of Roman Catholic monasteries, 198–99
Dīwān-i ʿĀm (Hall of Public Audience) in Amber Palace, *133*, 145, 146. *See also* Hall of Public Audience
do dāmī fabric of Chanderi, 66, 68
dowries, 1
dress, 51; courtly, 17, *58*, 59; histories of, 9, 17
du Mans, Raphaël, 85
dung, 157, 162
dupatta (shawl or scarf), 31
durbar, durbars, 135, 145, 146, 147
Dussehra festival, 146
Dutch, 163, 178, 207
Dutch East India Company. *See* VOC (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie)
Dutch traders, 43, 156; in Machilipatnam, 173, 181–82
Dutt, Romesh Chunder, 213
dyeing of cloth, 28, 154, 155; alchemy and, 188, 229nn187; workshops for, 114, 148
dyers, 25, 27–28, 119, 127, 155, 158, 162, 165–66, 172, 194, 209, 216, 234n15

dyestuffs, dyes, 10, 16, 19, *35*, 37, 43–44, 64, 118, 126, 154–55, 158–60, 176, 207, 209, 211, 213, 226n8; cotton cloths and, 1, 24, 196; materials for, 36, 156; mordants and, *6*, *7*, *140*, 147, 152, 154; recipes for, 28, 69, 234n51; variety of, 68–69. *See also names of individual dyes*

E

earrings, 126
East Africa, 14
East Asia, 17, 25
East India Company, English. *See* EIC
Eaton, Richard, 235n127
ecology, local, 10, 23, 46–47, 162, 215
Egypt, *22*, 46
EIC (East India Company, English), 24, 170, 181, 183, 185, 195, 197, 209, 212; artisans and, 162, 163; in Machilipatnam, 156, *156*; Puckle and, 171–73
elephants, 1, 29, 36, *52*, *53*, 113, 118, 159, 171, 201; as gifts, 76, 79, 138
Elizabeth I, Queen, 24
embroiderers, 206, 216, 234n15; British, 197, 204, 206, 236n66; female, 123, 188, 197, 204, 206
embroidery, embroidered cloth, 24, 28, 32, 41, *41*, 66, 68, 144, 212; British, 200, 236n56; of hunting coat, *89*, 89–90; Mary II and, 201, 204, 206, 209; with metal threads, *7*, 78, 178; as revision, 137; samplers and, 204; on slippers, 98; white on white, 115; by women, 123, 185, 188, 197, 201–9; wool, 211; workshops for, 114, 148. *See also* needlework
emotions: fabrics and, 71; letter-writing and, 80
enslavement, enslaved people, 25, 128, 213, 214
eri silk and silkworms, 39, 41
Ethiopians, 126
Europe, 10, 11, 19, 25, 29, 123, 142, 209; cloth imports in, 14–15, 46, 212; clothing in, 16, 17; cloth of, 31, 33, 36, 41, 112, 209; long-distance trade and, 17, 152; merchant ships of, 168, *169*, 170. *See also names of individual European countries and nationalities*
Europeans: depicted in wall hangings, 180–81; as *firangī*s, 181; Orientalist stereotypes put forward by, 18, 19; as traders, 1, 14, 38, 41, 156–57, 170, 182, 195
Evelyn, John, 197
exotic plants in Britain, 207–8

F

Fagel, Gaspar, 207–9
famine, 24, 61, 162, 166, 234n79
farangī sāz (painting style), 181
farmān (official imperial decree), 81–82, *82*
farrāshkhāna (storehouse for carpets and tents), 32
fashion and style, 14, 92, 98, 101, 121, 123, 139, 188, 196–97, 212; Akbar and, 44, 48, 51; history and theory of, 9, 17, 32; women's, 85, 135
Fatehpur Sikri, 32, 33
felt, 42–43, 215; from goat hair, 28, 43, *43*; mats of, 28, 43, *43*; tents of, 31, 227n86
festivals and feasts, 36, 119, 146, 148; decorations of, *30*, 31–32; Holi, 19, 118, *118*; Nizamuddin Ahmad describes, 178, 180; wedding, *30*, 31
fibers, 28, 36, 37, 44, 69; cotton, *47*, 61
Fiennes, Celia, 201, 204, 206, 209
figural imagery, 10, 24, 71, 86, 168, 174, *174*, 177. *See also* textiles, figural
fine arts, *25*
fires, 32, 79
Fischel, Roy, 130
Flatt, Emma, 19, 80, 226n12
Flood, Finbarr Barry, 14
floor coverings, 130, 139, 160. *See also* carpets; floor-spreads, cotton
floors, marble, 130
floor-spreads, cotton, *140*, 141, 144, *161*
floral imagery, 28, 33, 98, 134, 142, 151; embroidered, 41, 201, 204; in floor coverings, 141, 143; on Indian chintz textiles, 202, 209; in painted cloths, 155, 174; patterned, 35, 68; in textiles, 24, 36, 133, 196. *See also* flowers and plants; gardens; leaves
flowers and plants, 29, 118, 215, 226n12; in Amber, 134, 138, 139, 141, 144; in Britain, 188, 207–9. *See also* floral imagery; gardens; leaves; *and names of specific plants*
flying shuttle, 237n10
Fort St. George (Madras), 163, 183
fountains, 137, *138*
France, 11, 194, 209, 212, 214
French traders and travelers, 48, 59, 85, 151, 170, 172, 175–78, 189, 196
fur, furs, 64, 77, 90, 92, 94
furnishings, textile, 9, 62, 108, 114, 130, 132, 188, 201, 212
fustian, fustians, 201, 202, 204, 207, 237n77
futa (prayer shawl), 78

G

Gaj Singh, Maharaja (ruler of Marwar), painting of, *104*, 105–6, 144, 231n2
gandabherunda, 159
Gandhi, Maganlal, 215–16
Gandhi, Mahatma (Mohandas Karamchand), 214–16
Gandhi, Supriya, 225n69
gangājal, 50
Ganges (Ganga) River, 46, 50
gardens, 17, 145, 149; hothouse, 207–8; in Kashmir, 139; as metaphor, 20, 21–22; Mughal and Rajput, 130, 134, 137, 139, 141, 144, 208; in paintings, 59, 92, *92*; in poetry and literature, 29, 112, 182; in textiles, 9, 106, 130, 138, 143, 144, *148*; William and Mary and, 194, 207–9
garments, 9, 14, 16, 19, 37, 48, 59, 64, 94, 96, 99, 102, 107, 123, 130, 200; cotton, 28, 46, 48, 50, 51, 59, 61, 190; foreign, 32, 135; as gifts, 77, 78, 87, 100; for hot weather, 59, 81; lower, 35, 123, 168; men's, 100–101; Mughal, 17, 24, 28–29, 32, 42, 48, 52, 59, 68, 71, 74–75, 82, 88–89, 91, 103, 113; outer, 43, 48, 214; in paintings, 123, 189; in poetry, 86, 120; purposes of, 51, 108; regional, 32, 108; silk, 41, 62, 64, 74, 97, 226n85; upper, 35, 59, 60; for winter and rain, *77*; women's, 19, 126, 139; woolen, 41, 44–45, 51. *See also* Bikaner robe of honor; fashion and style; *and names of specific types of garments*
Garuda, *33*
gems and jewels, 29, 42, 59, 60, 78–80, 82, 90–91, 114, 145
gender, 19, 225n68, 236n31; representations of intimacy on *rūmāl*s, 128
Genghis (Chinggis) Khan, 11
geography, 23, 50, 115, 123
geometric patterns, 17, 35, 68, 166
Germany, 202, 203, 207
Ghiyath al-Din ʿAli-yi Naqshband, 83, *83*, 155, 230n61
Ghur, 112
gift-giving, 71, 76, 82, 102, 229n9; language of, 74–75; practices of, 79, 229n52; of textiles, 71, 74–79, 115, 171, 190, 211
Gilgit, *37*
globalization and global trade, 4, 19, 46; textiles and, 10, 22, 25, 209
Glorious Revolution of 1688, 24, 194. *See also* William and Mary
Glynn, Catherine, 129, 139, 231n4
goats, 43, 230n61; hair of, 28, 41–46; pashmina, 28, *44*, 214
Godavari River, 185; villages surrounding, 152, 163, 170
Gogunda, battle of, 65, *65*, 66
Golconda, *48*, 123, 152, 157, 160, 174, 176, 180, 185; fort of, 156, 177; Mughal armies and, 156, 182; Persian weavers in, 165–66, 212; Qutb Shahi dynasty of, 170, 172; sultanate of, 106, 121, 151, 155–56, 177–78; textiles and, *140*, 155, 211
gold, 28, 48, 94; embroidery of, 78, 112; thread of, 28, 31, 33, 36, 64, 75, 86, 123
Gond (Gondwana), 131
Gondawaram, 163
*gopī*s, Krishna and, *33*, 134, 137, 147, 149
gouache, 190
Govinda Deva, 147
gowns, 1, 181
Grabar, Oleg, 103, 227n81
Granoff, Phyllis, 16, 59–60
Graves, Margaret, 20
Greece, 46

Greenbury, Richard, *192*
guilds, 83
"Guinea cloth," 25, 226n92
Gujarat, 1, 4, 23, 28, 31, 36–37, 96, 112–13, 144, 162, 166, 180, 206, 214, 234n79; artisans of, 33, 148; cotton cloth of, *22*, 46, 116, 123, 155, 166–67, 171, 211, 226n86; famines in, 166; *varnaka* of, 29, 50, 119; weaving and weavers in, 33, 35, *35*
Gulab Singh, Maharaja (ruler of Jammu and Kashmir), 214

H

Habib, Irfan, 15, 81
Hadiqat al-Salātīn (Nizamuddin Ahmad), 151
Haft Anjuman, 138
Hall of Public Audience at Amber Palace, 110, 111, *133*, 145, 146. *See also* Dīwān-i ʿĀm
Hamida Banu Begum, 59
Hampton Court Palace, 188, 194, 195, 206–9
handkerchiefs, 75, 120
Hanuman, *58*, 59
Hardwick Hall, 198, *198*, 206
Hargreaves, James, 237n10
Harsha, 60
Hartkamp-Jonxis, Ebeltje, 168, 202
Hasan, Farhat, 76
hats, 1, 17, 59, 126, 176. *See also* caps; turbans
Hatton, Christopher, 207
Havart, Daniel, 173, 181–82
Hayat Bakshi Begum, 178
hemp, 19
Herat, *12*
Hijri dating system, 114
Hills, Paul, 16
Himalayas, 43
Hindi language and literature, 32, 41, 43, 99, 111, 117
Hinduism, 16, 19, 56, 99, 109, 177, 181; ascetics, *sadhus*, and *yoginī*s of, 52, *52*, 126–27; sartorial and bodily markers of, 100, 101, 137
Hindu Kush, 131
Hindustan: climate of, 43; cloth and networks in, 10, 211; immigration in, 14; landscape of textiles in, 214; regional rulers in, 25; as term, 4, 9
Hira Kumari, 109
Hiranand, 62
historical sources, 4; advice manuals, 51; business records, 4; diaries, 197; European narrative accounts, 163; European records, 152, 155, 158, 159; inventory lists, 20, 23, 206; letters, 74, 80–82, 81, 96, 99, 101, 102, 132, 151, 163; literature, 23, 111; Mughal imperial records, 28–32, 155, 171; travel narratives as, 4, 28, 48, 51, 74, 151, 196; workshop and storehouse (*kārkhāna*) records, 114–116. *See also* paintings; poetry, poems
historiography, 15, 25; of textiles, 10–11, 16–17
Holi festival, 19, 118, *118*
homespun, 15, 213, 214
Hormuz, 39
horses, 79, 81, 113, 118, 149, 171, 230n61
Huet, Pierre-Daniel, 196
Hughli, 41
Humayun, Emperor, 42, 43, 48, 87, *87*
humidity, 28, 47
Hutton, Deborah, 231n113
Hyderabad, 151, 155, 180, 182, 212, 235n127; architecture of, 177–78; visual culture of, 176–82
"Hyderabad painter," 178, *178*

I

Ibrahim Shah, Sultan, 177
iconography, 10, 105, 175, 201
icons, 121, 146–47
Ihtimam Khan, 171
ikat, 35, *35*, 123, 183
immigration and migration, 1, 14, 123, 148, 165, 166, 170, 211
imperialism, 25, 197. *See also* British Empire; colonization and colonialism
Indar Kanwar, Princess, 231n2
India: prime minister of, 215; as term, 4, 9
India, northeastern, 29, 33, 39, 41
India, northern, 11, 28, 48, 100, 212
India, northwestern, 109
India, southern, 36, 39
"Indian flowers" (*Indianische Blumen*) 202–3
Indian Ocean, 10, 46, 113
Indic dress, 55–56
indigo, 158, 160; American, 209, 213; as dye, 19, 37, 159, 185; trade of, 39, 171
Indonesia, 1, *4*, 157, *166*. *See also* Batavia; Jakarta; Java
Industrial Revolution, 196, 213
inscriptions, 74, 83, 86, 103, 105; on back of textiles, 113, 121, 132
Institutes of Akbar (Abu'l Fazl), 28. See also *Aʾīn-i Akbarī*
inventory lists, 20, 23, 206, 233n126; of Akbar's wardrobe, 28, 115; of Amber Palace, 108, 114–16, 152; inscriptions and, 121, 132
Iran, *43*, 85, 88, 144, 171, 177, 235n129; carpets from, 31, 113; immigrants from, 14, 177, 211; silks of, 38–39, 83, *135*, *137*; Yazd, 31, 33, 48, 83, 232n66
iron mordants, 158, *158*, 159
Irwin, John, 10, 154, 155, 173, 175, 203, 227n96
Isar Das, 171
Isfahan, 38, 87, 177–78, 181
Islam, 17, 45, 51, 114, 177. *See also* Shiʿa Islam; Sufism, Sufis; Sunni Islam, Sunnis
Islamicate dress, 55
Islam Khan, 78, 79, 229n41
Italy, 27, 183, 198, 203, 206, 207
Iʿtimad-ud-Dawla, 78

J

jackets, 1, *6*, 48, 92, *93*
jaggery, 158
*jāgīr*s (land grants), 110
Jahanara, Princess, 78, 225n68
Jahangir, Emperor, 11, 39, 66, 71, 77, 83, 88, 101, 103, 109, 134, 225n29, 229n21, 229n41, 230n784; ascension of, 42, 71; court of, 23–24; family of, 76, 78, 96; Kashmir and, 139, 229n27; paintings of, 60, *60*, 61, *66*, 90–91, *91*; Rai Singh and, 97, 192; robes of honor gifted by, 24, 75–77, 135
Jahāngīrnāma, as Jahangir's autobiography, 75–78
Jai Mandir, 110, 111, 138. *See also* Shīsh Mahal
Jain, Rahul, 10, 41, 107, 113, 233n137
Jainism, 59, 97
Jaipur, 109, 231n16; historical textile collections in, 113, 142; Kachhwaha court moved to, 115, 134, 148; patronage of artisans in, 109, 148. *See also* Amber court
Jai Singh, Maharaja, I (Mirza Raja Jai Singh), 106, 110, 111, 131, 146, 156; Amber Palace and, 137, 138; court poet of, 116–17; *farmān* sent to, 81–82, *82*; mobility of, 145–46; paintings of, *104*, 105–6, 231n2; son of, 108, 129, 132; textile collections of, 121, 132, 141, 144–45
Jai Singh, Maharaja Sawai, II, 109, 114, 129, 133, 147–48; relocates Kachhwaha court to Jaipur, 115, 148, 231n16
Jakarta, 1. *See also* Batavia
Jaleb Chowk, parade ground in Amber Palace, 146–47
jāma, 48, 100, 123, 126, 144; marks of musk on, 60, 228n159; in paintings, 92, *92*, 98, 139; unadorned white fabric of, 51, 60, 64, 98
jamākharch (account of valuations and expenditures), 114, 133
jāmdāni muslin, 47, *47*
Jannat-i ʿAdn (ʿAbdi Bey Shirazi), 226n83
Japan, 1, *6*, 157, 183, 208, 212
Japanning, 197
jasmine (*Jasminum sambac*), 207
Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur, Maharaja (ruler of Marwar), 128; painting of, 144, *144*
Jaunpur, 42
Java, *4*, *5*. *See also* Indonesia
Jesuit missionaries, 92
jharokhā (public viewing window or balcony), 90, 96, 110
Jimanvār Paridhān Vidhi ("Dinner and Dress Rituals,") (Vidyasoma Muni), 36–37, 41
Jodhpur, 128, 144, *144*. *See also* Marwar
joint-stock trading companies, 196
Jones, Ann Rosalind, 192
jute, 19, 158, 227n76
Jyotirīsvara, *Varna Ratnākara*, 29

K

Kabir, 20, *21*
Kabul, 43, 81, 131, 227n91
kacchā dyes, 19, 69
Kachhwaha, Bharmal (ruler of Amber), 109
Kachhwaha, Ram Das, 139
Kachhwaha dynasty of Amber, 109, 110, 112, 121, 138, 231n16; sacred icons of, 146–47; textiles of, 24, 107, 114, 139; travels of, 131–32
kalam (*qalam*) (reed pen), 154, *154*
kalamkari (*kalamkārī* or *qalamkārī*) cloth, 154, 166, 168, 176, 207, 234n10, 236n66; for Amber court, 152, 175; British crewelwork based on, 185, *186–87*, *188*, 199, 201; commissioned by Shah Jahan, 151–52; figural, 168, 212; Golconda *rūmāls*, *122*, 123, *123*, *124*, *125*, 126; production of, 155, 157–62, 165; as technique for making *pichhwāi*, 147; tent hanging of, *159*, 159–60; as term, 152, 154; traded within Golconda, 171
Kālāstri, as painter, 163, 165, 168. *See also* Sri Kalahasti
Kali, 146
Kāliya, *33*
Kamada, Yumiko, 236n66
kamarbandh (cummerbund), 37
kambals (blankets), 42
kamkhab-i-Yazdi (brocade from Yazd), 31
kanchukī (blouse), 120, 123, 128
kandul (ox-horn pick), *47*
Kapadā Chīntanī ("Wish-fulfilling Gem of Clothing"), 117–18, 128, 139
Kapadā Kutūhal ("Clothing Curiosities"), 117–20, 128
kapad-dwara (clothing storage), 114
Karan (ruler of Pahuna), 117
Kariz, 112
karkarāq (wardrobe), 28
kārkhānas (royal workshops, storage facilities), 83, 114, 148, 155, 232n56
Karnataka, 156, 212
Kashan, velvet from, 112, 232n66
Kashghar, 112
Kashifi Sabzawari, Husayn Waʿiz, 51
Kashmir, 28, 44, 112, 115, 144, 151, 209, 214; gardens of, 106, 139; Mughal Empire and, 65, 229n27; pashmina shawls of, 43, *47*, 113, 227n96; textiles from, 36, 37, 111
kasumbha dye, 118. *See also* safflower
Kay, John, 237n10
Kayasths, at Amber court, 112
Kendrick, A. F., 236n56, 237n76
Kensington House, 194
Kesar Kiyārī (saffron garden), 145, 149
kewrah, kevra flower (*Pandanus odoratissimus*, screw-pine tree), scent of, 29, 226n12
khādī (homespun cloth), as protest against British manufactures, 214–15. See also *swadeshī* movement
khalkhāl (fine thin cotton cloth), 48
Khān-i-Khānān. *See* ʿAbd al-Rahim Khān-i-Khānān
kharamu naramu cloth, 37
khas (*Chrysopogon zizanioides*; vetiver), 60–62
khāsa cotton cloth, 48, 50
Khatris, at Amber court, 112
Khera, Dipti, 19, 138, 228n162
Khidmat Parast Khan, 94, 96. *See also* Reza Bahadur
khilʿat (robe of honor), 75, 77–79, 228n169, 229n28. *See also* robes of honor; *sarāpā*
Khulāsat al-Mujarrabāt ("Quintessence of Prescriptions"), dye recipes in, 69
Khurasan, 31, 43
Khurram, Prince, 75–76, *76*, 78. *See also* Shah Jahan
Khusrau and Shirin (Nizami), love story of, 86, 87, *87*, 92, 94, *94*
Khusrau II, 101
Khyber Pass, 131
Kia, Mana, 14
King, Anya, 228n160
Kinra, Rajeev, 112
Kirat Singh (son of Maharaja Jai Singh I), 132
Kishan Singh (grandson of Maharaja Jai Singh I), 129, *129*
Kiyāra Sundar township, 50
Koch, Ebba, 94, 141
Kohat, 131
Krishna, 117, 147, 149, 212, 226n83; images of, 33, *33*, 134, 137
Krishna River, 160, 163, 185; villages surrounding, 152, 170
kulāhdār turbans, 64
Kuliyat-e-Sultan Quli Qutb Shah, *178*, *179*
kumkum, as colorant, 19
Kurds, 112
kurk (goat hair), 43
Kusa, 56, *56*

L

La Boullaye-Le-Gouz, François de, 189–90, *190*
Ladakh, 44
lahariyā patterned textiles, 36, 119, *119*
Lahore, 9, 12, 32, 33, 38, 94, 96, 131, 144, 151; textiles and carpets from, 133, *142*, 146
lampas weave, 33, *33*, *34*, 230n75
land policies, of Mughal Empire, 110
landscapes of cloth, 23, 27–69
Latin language, 101
laundering of cotton cloth, 1, 48, 51, 196, 215, 236n31
Lava, 56, *56*
Layla and Majnun (Nizami), love story of, 87, 101, 134–35
leather, 48, 81, *81*
leaves, 30, 36, 37, 39, 98; embroidered, 203–4, *204*, 207; imagery of, 123, 143, 159, 174, 203–4, 236n56; indigo, 185, 209; *saz* style, 203–4. *See also "mulberry" entries*
lehenga skirt, 123
Lemire, Beverly, 208
lemons and limes, 112, 162
leopards, 201, 202
Lepakshi, 168, *168*, 181
letters, 99, 102; gift-giving and, 80–82; as historical sources, 74, 81, 96, 99, 101, 102, 132, 151, 163; written on cotton cloth, 81–82, *82*
Līlāwatī mathematical text, 64
lime (inorganic mineral), 31, 46, 162
liminality of textile-transformed spaces, 108
linen, linens, 51, 194, 206–7; damasks of, 198, 206; diaphanous, 188–89
locality, 10, 28, 32, 155, 170, 176
London, 10, 141, 183, 194, 207, 209, 211, 224n28; Machilipatnam trade with, 185, 195
long-distance export trade, 4, 10, 17, 113, 152, 160, 162, 170, 185
looms, 10; in Britain, 213; draw-, 83–84, *84*, 86, *86*; hand-, 213; pit, *47*; power, 213, 237n10; technology of, 28, 33, 44
Losty, J. P., 174
lotus flower (*Nelumbo nucifera*; *kamal*), *34*, 36, 141, 160, 175, 203
love poems, textiles in, 117–18
love stories: of Khusrau and Shirin, 87; of Layla and Majnun, 87
Lucknow, 28, 116, 162
lungī (lower garment) 48, *54*, 55, *55*
Lurs, 112
luxury textiles, 14–15, 25, 41, 45–46, 68, 106, 112, 194

M

Macassar, 171
Machilipatnam, *147*, 163, 166, 168, 170, 177, 211; Europeans in, *156*, 157, 171–73, 182; governor of, 160, 171; kalamkari cloths and, 176, 185; Mughal imperial officials sent to, 151–52; as port, 151, 152; water conditions in the vicinity of, 161–62
Machilipatnam hand-painted *chīnt* cloth, 24, 113, 116, 120, 121, 128, 212; fame of, 151–83
Madder (*Rubia tinctorum*), 43; as dye, 19, 160, 209
Madhodas, *Kapadā Chīntanī*, 117, 118
Madhya Pradesh, *38*, 116
Madras, 165, 168; British in, 157, 163, 183. *See also* Fort St. George
Madurai, 160
Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum (Jaipur), 113, *148*, 232n77
mahmudī fine muslin cloth, *115*, 116, 232n67
Mahmud Khalji, 232n67
Maithili language, 29
Majnun in Persian poetry, 52, 230n84. *See also* Layla and Majnun; love stories

Malabar Coast textiles, 36
Malaysia, 1, 157
Maldives, the, 171
malmal (muslin cotton cloth), 46, 48, 50
malmalsāhī cotton cloth, 37
Malpur, 116
Malwa, 66, *66*, 67, 68
manasasa (*manasusa*), 232n92
mandīl, *mindīl* (handkerchief), 75
Mangalore, 36
Mani, Lavanya, 158, *158*
*mansabdār*s (noblemen), 99, 110
manshūr (official letter), 151–52
Man Singh, Raja, 110, 111, 134, 138, 146; poetry in praise of, 130, 143
Maotha Lake, 133, 145, 149
Marathas, 11, 131, 156, 182, 212. *See also* Shivaji
marble floors and walls, 16, 107, 130, 139, 141, 142
Marwar, 96, *104*, 105, *105*, 224–25n29, 231n4. *See also* Jodhpur
Marxist theory, 15
Mary II, Queen, 24, 188, 194, 195, 204; embroidery and, 201, 206, 209; gardens of, 207–9
Mashhad, 232n66
mashrū (*mashrūʿ*) cloth, 35, *35*, 36, 50, 115, 123
mats, 43, 130
McWilliams, Mary, 137
mechanization of cotton production, 214. *See also* technology
Mediation of Ornament (Grabar), 103
medium, cloth as, 16, 23, 74
Meghna River, 46
*mehfil*s (gatherings), 99, 138, 144
mehīmudīshāhī cloth, 37
mercantilism, 194
metallic oxides, as mordants, 154
Metropolitan Museum of Art: large-scale hanging in, 176, *180*, 180–81, 226n87, 230n77, 232n97
Mewar, 66, 110, 117
Middle East, 11, 157, 170, 213
Ming dynasty, 37, 38
Mir Jumla. *See* Mir Muhammad Saʿid Ardastani
Mir Muhammad Saʿid Ardastani (Mir Jumla), 170–71
Mirza Maʿsum Khafi, 79
Mirza Nathan, 78–79, 99, 229n41
Mirza Sadeq Qazvini ("Chishro"), 151–52, 170
mishru. See *mashrū* (*mashrūʿ*) cloth
Mithila, 29
Mittal, Jagdish, 147
mobility and movement: of artisans, 154, 162–68, 183, 212; of Kachhwaha rulers, 145–46; of Mughal court, 23–24; in Mughal Empire, 12, 24–25, 111; of Rajput elite, 106, 128, 130; textiles and, 11, 147, 211; of Timurid rulers, 12, 14
Mocha, 171
mohur, 227n101
Moin, A. Azfar, 228n165
Mongol courtly traditions, 28
monumental carpets and hangings, 9, 12, 16, 146, 168, 178, 212
Moosvi, Shireen, 15, 226n6
mordant, mordants, 154, 158, *158*, 159, 204
Mordaunt, Lady, 197
mūga silk and silkworms, 39, 41
Mughal, as term, 107
Mughal court, 12, 14, 22, 99, 105, 108–12, 144, 156; nobility and, 11, 98–99, 112; style of, 19, 56, 141–42; Sufi and *akhlāq* texts' influence at, 50–51
Mughal court textiles, 9, 22, 23, 46, 71, 151; cotton, 28, 46–50; goat hair, 41–46; silk, 37–41
Mughal emperors, 9, *12*, 109–10, 151–52, 211. *See also names of individual emperors*
Mughal Empire, 4, 24, 46, 65, 99, 113, 131, 231n10; alliance building in, 76, 102; art of cloth and, 25; the Deccan and, 156, 212; diversity of, 23, 50; historiography of, 15, 23; landscapes of cloth in, 27–69; map of, *13*; ministers and generals of, 108, 130; postal system of, 80–82; records of, 28–32; style of, 17, 83, 105, 149; textiles and politics in, 11–14, 197, 211
Muhammad the Prophet, 51, 178
Muhammad Qutb Shah, Sultan, 48, *48*, *49*, *14*, 178, *178*, *179*
Muhammad Sali Kanbu, 66
Muhammad Shah of Bengal, Sultan (Jalaluddin Muhammad Shah), 232n67
Muʿin al-Din Chishti, *45*
Mukerji, Chandra, 196
mulberry silk production, 28, 37–39
mulberry tree (*Morus alba*), 37, 39, 41
Multan, *115*, 116, 120
Munʿim Khan, robes of honor gifted by, *61*, 62, *62*, *63*
muraqqaʿ albums, 103
museums, 10, 113. *See also names of individual institutions*
music, Khurasani, 31
musk, 60, 228n160; marks of, 228n159
muslin cloth, fine, 31, 39, 46, 55, 60, 64, 116; from Bengal, 61, 113; in European art, 188–90; exported to Britain, 188–89; valuation of, 14, 28
muslin cloth, plain, 14, 32, *210*, *212*, 214; from Bengal, *8–9*, 144, 212
musters, as physical patterns, 173, 175
myrobalan (*Terminalia chebula*), 157
myrrh, 61
Mysore, 212
mysticism, 20, 27, 45, 74, 88, 94. *See also* Sufism, Sufis

N

nādirī (sleeveless robe), 78
nagaravarnana (description of a city), 112, 226n11
Nagelwancha, 160
nalwās (hollow bamboo tubes), 81
namad (felted floor covering), 43, 44
Nangarhar, 43
Naoroji, Dadabhai, 213
Naqd ʿAli Beg, 192, *192*, *193*
naqshband, as designer of patterns and weaving plans, 83
naqsheh, *naqsh*, as weaving plan, 83
Narottamdas, 111, 134
Natif, Mika, 230n79, 233n112
National Museum (New Delhi), 126
natural history illustrations, 142, 175
naturalism, 105, 143, 151, 200, 230n86
natural world, in poetic language of textiles, 20–21, 22, 69
Navratri festival, 146
Nayaka courts, *56*, 182
Necipoğlu, Gülru, 82
needles, 206
needlework, 66, 68, 115, 185, 195. *See also* embroidery, embroidered cloth
needleworkers, 198, 236n66. *See also* embroiderers
Nehru, Jawaharlal, 215
Netherlands, *7*, 168, 176, 189, 195; William and Mary arrive from, 194, 207
Nevinson, John, 202
New World flora and fauna, 22
nīl netrā cloth, 37
Nizami: Khusrau and Shirin, *87*, 92, 94, *94*; Layla and Majnun, 101
Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Hadiqat al-Salātīn*, 151, 152, 154, 178, 180
nobility, 1, 9, 11, 20
noblemen, 60, 76, 123; Rajput, 138, 148
noblewomen, 19, *26*, 31, *58*, 59, 71
nomadism, of Timurid dynasty, 12
Nur Jahan, 78
Nur Muhammad, 97, 99
Nusrati: *Gulshan-i ʿIshq*, 21–22; textile metaphors of, 20–21

O

O'Hanlon, Rosalind, 64
opium, 76
Orientalism, 18, 192
Orissa (Odisha), 36, 39, 160
Ottoman Empire, 11, 14, 75, 91, 190, 237n7; cloth from, 31, 203, 207; trade with, 38, 46, 152, 212
overland trade, 46, 112, 177
Overton, Keelan, 235n129

P

Pādshāhnāma (ʿAbd al-Hamid Lahori), 87, 94, *95*, 131
pagriyā (turban), 98
painted cotton cloth, *1–6*, 112, *113*, 120, 123, 145, 154, 170, 202, 211–12, 236n27; along Coromandel Coast, 24, *56*; painters of, 25, 155, 163, 165, 172–74, 183, 234n15; patronage of, 168–71; processing of, 157–58
painters, 14, 60, 87, 189
painting, 16; art of cloth and, 9; of cotton fabric, 1, *2–3*, *4*, *5*; Mughal style of, 110; Rajput, 178
paintings, 10, 103, 123, 134, 147–48, 174, 180; of Akbar, 52, *53–55*, 65, *65*, 66, *66*, 67, 68, *68*; of atlas moth, 39, *39*; cloth and clothes in, 36, 64, 71, 74, 87; of Jahangir, 90–91, *91*; of Jaswant Singh, 144, *144*; of poet-saint Kabir, 20, *21*; of Rajput rulers, *104*, *105*, 105–6; of Ram Singh, 145; of Timur, *12*; of wedding festivities, *30*, 31; of women, *58*, 59, 84
pajama (*pāyjāma*), as term, 35
pajama trousers, 59, 126, 129
Pakistan, 9, 113
Palakollu (Palicol), *147*, 152, 173
panchtoliyā fabric, 137
Pandit Ratnasomagani, 36
pantaloons, 123, 168, 180
parda (curtain or veil), 100–1, 145, 178
pardadār ("curtain holder" or king's chamberlain), 101
Parimoo, Ratan, 118
Paris, 178
Parker, Rozsika, 197
parmnarm (soft pashmina shawl), 45
Parthasarathi, Prasannan, 162, 196
Parvez, Prince Sultan, 52, *52*, 78
pashm, 45; as term, 44
pashmina, 115; shawls of, 9, *46*, *47*, 77, 113; as term, 44
pashmina goats, 28, 37, 43, 44, *44*, 142, 214
Patan, 36
patchwork design, *4*, *5*
patkā (sash), 33, *34*, 35, 36, 59, 211; Akbar wears, *54*, 55, *55*, 65, *65*; *bandhanī*, 65, *65*, *66*, 211; silk, 144
Patna, 227n73
patronage, 111, 178, 182; of cloth, 24, 64, 152; textile production and, 1, 156–57, 168–71, 212
patrons, 170, 182
patterns, *22*, 33, 47, 71, 99, 102, 168, 230n71; *bandhanī*, *22–23*, 65–66, 68, 123, 211, 226n86; chevrons, 35, 36; *chīnt*, 36, 39, 64, 115–16, 118–20, 139, 212, 234n10; figural, 24, 86, 90, 199; geometric, 17, 35, 68, 166; ikat, 123; repetition of, 84, 85, 174
patterns, physical (musters), 173–76
pavilions, 92, 110, 139, 144, 146; Bairat, 134, *134*. *See also* tents, pleasure pavilions
pāy andāz (textile entry path), for emperor's steps, *30*, 31
pearls, 78, 79, 105, 113, 232n64
pens: bamboo, 154, *154*, 185; metal, 159; reed (*kalam*, *qalam*), 123, 154, 166
perfumes, 29, 30, 69, 138, 228n160. *See also* musk
perishability, perishable goods, 69, 145; textiles and, 17, 19, 225n72
Persian art and culture, 111, 177
Persianate style, 1, 32, 135
Persian courtiers, 92, *92*, *93*, 192
Persian Gulf, 157, 170–71, 190
Persian language, 14, 36, 56, 64, 75, 86; Europeans and, 173, 181–82; inscriptions in, 74, 113; love poetry and stories in, 87, 128, 134; poetry in, 20, 52, 182; textile names in, 32, 44, 61, 117, 120, 152; words in, 35, 45, 48, 50, 100, 115
Peruk, 171
Petaboli (Peddapalli), 152, 160, 163, 177, 182
Phillips, Amanda, 75
phulkarī textiles, 68
pichhwāī (cloth hung behind Krishna icon), 147, *147*
pillows and cushions, 99, 144; covers for, *148*, 148–49
pineapples, 22, 159, 208
pīrāhan (shirt or tunic), 48, 59
pītambar, 21; as term, 226n85
Platts, John T, 50
pleasure pavilions, 134, *134*, 139, 144
poetry, poems, 9, *56*, 59, 86, 109, 128, 188, 216; Amber court textiles and, 116–20, 137; cloth in, 20, 60; courtly, 108, 111, 128, 137–38, 144; as historical source, 4, 15, 20; Persian, 20, 52, 182; poets and, 14, 83, 134, 155; in praise of Raja Man Singh, 111, 112, 143
poison, 132, 194
politics, 110; in Mughal Empire, 11–14; textiles and, 15–16, 23–24, 62, 64, 82
Pollock, Sheldon, 18
pomegranate rinds, as dye, 159
Popp, Stephan, 76
population of Mughal Empire, 11
porcelain, Chinese, 176, 194, 202, 207
portability of cotton cloth, 46
portraits: 129–130; European, 190, *191*, *192*, *193*; as expression of inner self, 230n79; Mughal, 60, 86–91, *91*, 94; of Rai Singh, 97, *97*, 98; Rajput, 105, *105*, 130, 148. *See also* paintings
Portuguese language, 111
Portuguese traders, 41, 157
postīn (leather coat), 48
Potter, Ami, 226n37
Prakash, Om, 234n79
Prasad, C. Shambu, 215
Prayagdas, *Kapadā Kutūhal*, 117
prices, 28, 109, 121, 226n6; of cotton cloth, 15, 47; of pashmina, 44–45; of silk, 38, 41, 83; of velvet, 48, 232n66, 233n137
Pritchett, Frances, 121
Puckle, William, 181; diary of, 171–73
Pulicat, 163
Punjab, 68, 110, 113, 116

Q

qabā jackets, 48
qalamkārī pārcha. *See* kalamkari cloth
qalam pens, 166
*qanāt*s (tent wall textiles), 145, 151, *152–53*, *159*, 159–60, 171
Qandahar, 131, 224n28
Qandhari, Muhammad ʿArif, 31, 32
Qazimbazar, 37
quilts, 41, 200, 206
Qutb Shahi dynasty, 121, 151, 155, 156. *See also* Golconda

R

Rabiʿ al-Awwal, 178, 235n145
race, 126–27; European constructions of hierarchies of, 18; Mughal and Deccani courts and, 127
Radha, 117
*rāgamāla*s, 99, 134, 139, *139*; Dīpak Rāga, *139*; Varadī Rāginī, *139*
raised work (embroidery), 200
Rai Singh, Raja, 135, 138, 230n98; Bikaner robe and, 71, *74*, *85*, *86*, 87, 96, 127, 192; distances himself from court, 74, 96, 108; Jahangir and, 80, 102; portraits of, *97*, 97–98
Rajasthan, 65, 109–10, 119–20, 144, 147, 149, 212; art of cloth in, 106; *bandhānī* cloth of, 211, 226n86; Bikaner robe and, 71; climate of, 112, 134; principalities of, 4, 148. *See also* Rajput domains
Rajasthan State Archives (Bikaner), 114, *114*
Rajput domains, 20, 64, 66, 99, 105, 131, 152, 211, 224–25n29; Amber, 66, 133, 170; rulers of, 15–16, 71, 74, 96, 108, 148. *See also* Amber; Jodhpur; Marwar; Mewar; Rajasthan
Rama, 56, *56*, 146
Ramaswamy, Vijaya, 163
Rāmāyana (Valmiki), 56, 59
Ramdas Rangrez, Ustād, 28, 69, 155
Ram Singh, Raja, 108, *129*, 129–33; paintings of, 139, 145
rang Akbarī (brilliant red color), 69
Ravana, 58, 59, 146
Rawāʾih Gulshan-i Qutbshāhī (Ulfati Sawaji), 155
Ray, Sugata, 226n87
recipes for dyes, 69, 158
red, reds, 21, 22, 35, 37, 55, 66, 92, 129, 134, 141, 149, 165–67, 175, 177, 183, 199, 207, 237n75; in carpets, 142–43, 144; dyes of, 19, 27, 36, 48, 69, 139, 155, 158–61, 185, 209, 213, 234n51;

garments of, 123, 126, 190, 199; "Turkey," 209. See also *āl* dye; chay root; madder
red dye baths, 158, 159, 234n30
regionalism, 11, 64, 106
regional level of analysis, 19, 25; courts and, 24, 32; textiles and, 1, 20, 64–68, 107, 211
religion, 50, 59, 99, 111; in Amber Palace, 146–47; textiles and, 16, 212. *See also names of individual faiths and branches*
Rembrandt, drawings after Mughal paintings by, 189, *189*
resist-dyeing, resist-work, 147, 159, 167–68, 212; mordant and, *6*, *7*, *113*, 154
Reza Bahadur, 94, *95*, 96, 231n4. *See also* Khidmat Parast Khan
rice starch, 162
Riello, Giorgio, 14–15, 196
rīsmān (cotton), 50
rīti literature, 111
rituals and ceremonies, 62, 79
Riza-i ʿAbbasi, 87–88, 88, 181
Roberts, Jennifer, 30
robes, 1; silk, 64, 94, 99. *See also* Bikaner robe; robes of honor
robes of honor, 24, 79, 99, 103, 229n25; in *Jahāngīrnāma*, 75, 77; Munʿim Khan gives, *61*, 62, *62*, *63*, 74. See also *khilʿat*; *sarāpā*
Robinson Crusoe (Defoe), 194
roller printing, 213
Roman Catholic vestments, 199
Rome, 190
roosters, 181
rosewater, 79, 138; sprinklers of, 121, 139, 182
Roth, Nicolas, 112
Roy, Tirthankar, 196
Royal Ontario Museum (Toronto), 137
roznāmcha bahi (daily work registers), 114
rubies, 1, 27, 80, 91, 151
Rublack, Ulinka, 16, 226n4
rudraksha beads, 56
*rūmāl*s (small multi-purpose cloths), 130, 141, 149, 174, 232n94; Amber collection of, 155; as visual record of types of cloth, 120–30, 174; in Cincinnati Art Museum, 128; reused and appliquéd, *199*, 199–200, *200*

S

sādhu (Hindu ascetic), 126–27
Saʿdi, *Būstān*, 182
Safavid court and culture, 48, 82, 85, 91–92, 121, 190
Safavid Empire, 11, 14, 17, 36, 39, 43, 152, 177; mulberry silk production in, 37, 38; silk from, 16, 83, 106, 192; textiles of, 43, 82, 86, 135, 144; trade with, 46, 106, 192, 212
safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius*), as dye, 19, 69, 118, 165. See also *kasumbha*
saffron, 145, 149; as dye, 19, 118
sago palm, 208
Salim, Prince. *See* Jahangir, Emperor
salīmshāhī slippers, 98
Samarqand, 43, 112, 209
samite weave, *86*
samplers, embroidery and, 204
Sandesara, Bhogilal Jayachandbhai, 226n37
Sanganer, 115, 116, 148
Sanskrit language, 29, 36, 64; poetry in, 60, 111; words in, 37, 45, 66
sappan wood dye, 158
sarāpā ("head-to-foot" honored clothing), 75, 86. See also *khilʿat*; robes of honor
sarasa (South Asian cotton cloth), 1, *6*
Sardar, Marika, 176, 235n144
saris, 1, 21, 48, 119, 181
Sarkar, Jadunath, 66, 68, 146
sashes, 75, 98, 144; worn at court, 33, *34*, 35. See also *patkā*
Satgaon, Bengal, 41, *41*
satī (ritual self-immolation), 177
satin, satins, 31, 32, 112, 119, 178. See also *atlas*
Satsaī (Biharilal), 111, 116–17, 128
Sayyid Iliyas, 171
Sayyids at Amber court, 112
scarves, 56. See also *dupatta*; shawls
scents, 19, 31; air cooling and, 61–62; of clothing, 29–30, 32. *See also* musk; perfumes
Schama, Simon, 178
Schimmel, Annemarie, 60
Schofield, Katherine Butler, 19, 99
Schwaiger, Imre, 113
scientific management, 213
seashells, 161, 162
Sengupta, Rajarshi, 161, 234n10
senses and sensory experience, 18, 29, 31, 103, 126, 211; of cloth, 120, 216; Orientalism and racialized hierarchies of, 18
sensory culture: of Mughal court, 103; textiles and, 1, 9, 17–22
sensory histories, of cloth, 17–22
sericulture, 37–38, 212, 237n7. *See also "silk" entries*
Seringapatam, 237n7
servants, 76, 82, 114, 123, 128
Seyller, John, 56, 230–31n105
Shahanshah-i Hindustan (kings of kings of Hindustan), 9
Shah Jahan, Emperor, 11, *18*, 19, 66, 76, 78, 81–83, 105, 109–12, 142, 209, 226n18, 230n784; accession ceremony of, 94, *95*, 96; *Pādshāhnāma* of, 87, 94, *95*, 131; paintings of, 105–6, *106*; patronage of, 112, 152, 178; *qalamkārī* cloth and, 151, 152; Rembrandt draws, 189, *189*
Shah Ji, *100*
Shah Qasim, 182
Shah Shuja, Prince (son of Shah Jahan), *18*, 19
Shah Tahmasp, 43
Shalem, Avinoam, 79
Sharma, Sunil, 180
shawls, 21, 28, 42, 43, 66; cotton, 48, 55, *55*; lightweight, 30, 56, 59; pashmina, 9, 44, 45, *46*, *47*; prayer, 78
Shaykh Hansiwal, 79
sheep, 43, 77
Shiʿa Islam: rulers of Qutb Shahi dynasty and, 121, 178; rulers of Safavid dynasty and, 177
shifts, 48, 59; cotton, 56, 59
Shila Devi Temple, in Amber Palace, 146–47
Shila Mata, 146, 147
Shirin, 92, 94
Shirley, Sir Anthony, 190
Shirley, Sir Robert, 190, *190*, *191*
Shirley, Teresia, 190
shirts, 1, 48
Shīsh Mahal, in Amber Palace, 138, *138*. *See also* Jai Mandir
Shiva, 59
Shivaji (Maratha ruler), 131, 132, 156
shoes, 98
Shravan Teej, as festival of rains, 119
shrouds, 74
Siam, 170. *See also* Thailand
sīdhā parda, 101
silk, raw, 190, 212
silk, silks, 9, 17, 21–22, 28–32, *34*, 37, 48, 51, 84, 103, 119, 145, 194, 203, 227n73, 227n76; brocaded, 60, 62; colors of, 51, 69; cotton woven with, 33, 35, *35*, 50; figural, 87, 92, 94, 106, 188, 190–93, 212; from Gujarat, 33, 112–13; *patkās* of, 65, *65*; Persian, 16, 71, 83, 165; velvet, 45, 69, 130, *135*; wild, 36, 37, 39, 214; woven, 33, 211
silk industry, 82, 212. *See also* sericulture
silk trade, 38–39, 112, 192
silkworms, 38, 39, 69; eggs of, 212, 237n7
silver thread and wire, 28, 33, *86*
Sims, Eleanor, 177
Sindh, 113
Singh, Chandramani, 10, 113–14, 116–18, 120, 137, 232n77
Singh, Kavita, 230n86
Sinopoli, Carla, 12, 14
Sita, *58*, 59
sits (Dutch) (South Asian painted cotton cloth), 1
Skelton, Robert, 141
skin color, 126–27; dyes and, 127
skirts, 1, 48, 89, 99–100, 123, 139, 168
slave trade, slavery, 25, 213. *See also* enslavement
Smart, Ellen, 113, 231n4, 232n63, 232n97
Snell, Rupert, 232n73
sofreh (table linen), 120
South Asia, 11; overland circulation of textiles within, 4, 36; as term, 9. *See also* Hindustan
Southeast Asia, 157, 212; spice markets in, 1, 170
sozanī (embroidered textiles), 68
space and space making, 138; textiles and, 16, 24, 106, 133, 139, 146–47

Spice Islands, 152
spinning, spinners, 14, 39, 47, 69, 157, 194, 213, 215
Spinning Jenny, 237n10
Sreenivasan, Ramya, 111, 128
Sri Kalahasti (Kālāstri), as place, 165, 183. *See also* Kālāstri
Sri Lanka, 160, 207, 208
Stallybrass, Peter, 74, 192
starch, starching, 158, 162
Steingass, Francis Joseph, 228n128
stereotypes, Orientalist, 18
Stewart, Tony, 128
stitching, local traditions of, 32
storage of clothing, 20, 114
Styles, John, 236n31
submission, ceremonial garments of, 62–64, 71
Subrahmanyam, Sanjay, 23, 196, 197
sūf (wool), 36, 44, 45
Sufism, Sufis, 14, 51, *60*, 88; love poetry and stories of, 21, 87, 100; saints of, *60*, 61, 77, 177; wool and, 45, 51
sugar, 39, 171
Sukh Mahal, in Amber Palace, 137, *138*, 142
Sulaiman Khan Karrani, 62
Sultānpur, 116
sumptuary laws, 14
Sunargaon, 31, 32, 50
Sunni Islam, Sunnis, 11
Surat, 180
Suri Rao, 171
swadeshī movement, 214–15
Swahili Coast, 1
Sykas, Philip, 237n77
symbolism: of Akbar's wardrobe, 64, 65, 66, 68; of Bikaner robe, 100; of cloth in *swadeshī* movement, 214–15; of courtly robes, 77; of tents to Timurid dynasty, 12; of textiles in Mughal Empire, 12, 28
Synge, Lanto, 203, 236n56

T

taffeta cloth, 41, 112, 117, 232n73
tāftā cloth, 117. *See* taffeta cloth
Taglang La Pass, *44*
taj (baton), 92, *93*
Tajiks, 112
Taj Mahal, 142
takya-namad (felted floor covering), 43
tālār (pillared portico), in Safavid architecture, 178
Tamil language, 182
Tamil Nadu, 168
tannins, 157
tansukh (*tanusakh*) cotton cloth, 37, 50, 119, 228n128
tapestries, 198, 203
tapestry weave, 44
taqueté weave, 230n75
tasar silk, 41, *41*, 227n73; silkworms that produce, 39
taste, sense of, 103, 126; *rasa* and, 18
Tatars, 112
Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, 48, 59, 177, 178, 227n75
tea, 196
technology: embroidery and, 204, 206; improved manufacturing and, 65; of looms, 28; mechanization of Anglo-American cotton production and, 213
teliā rūmāl cloth, 123
Telugu language, 172, 173, 182
templates for *rūmāls*, 174. *See also* patterns, physical
temple wall paintings, 181; figural kalamkari textiles compared to, 168, *168*
temporality, cloth and, 16–17, 20, 121, 211
tents, 12, 32, 43, 56, 107, 120, 131, 138, 145–46, 151; hangings for, *159*, 159–60; mobility of Kachhwaha rulers and, 145–46; Mughal architecture and, 16, 111, 146; in paintings, *30*, 31; wild silk panels of, 28, 41
textiles: aesthetics and, 15, 17; as communication medium, 16, 17, 102; economics and, 1, 14–16, 211; as furnishings, 108, 121, 130; gift-giving and, 74–75; history and historiography of, 10–11, 14–16, 24; luxury, 45–46; manufacturing and production of, 114, 148, 155, 211; perishability of, 17, 19; poetry and, 20–21, 116–20, 216; politics and, 62, 71; spatial roles of, 24, 107, 108
textiles, figural, 10, 12, 87–88, 154, 155, 176, 177, 185, 196, 202; in Amber Palace, 133, 135, *135*, *136*, 137; in paintings, 87, 106; politics of, 82–83; weaving of, 82–86
textile trade, 109, 112, 152, 168, 182, 196, 236n27; Akbar and, 64–68
Thailand, 1, 157. *See also* Siam
Thar desert, 113
Thévenot, Jean de, 51, 177–78
Thompson, Jon, 146
thread, threads: cotton, 28, 47, 69; gold, 31, 48, 64, *86*, 123; metal-wrapped, 28, 42, 130, *135*, 137, *137*; silk, 83, 142, 148; silver, *86*; wool, 206; worsted wool, 197
Tibet, 33, 44
tie-dyed textiles: *bandhanī*, *22–23*, 36, 65–66, 68; *lahariyā*, 36, 119, *119*
Tillotson, Giles, 133
Timur, Emperor, 11, 12, *12*, 91, 225n31
tin mordants, *158*
Tipu Sultan, 212, 237n7
tirāz (woven or embroidered inscriptional bands on robes of honor; inscribed textiles), 75
toshākhāna (*toshkhāna*) (wardrobe or luxury storage), Amber inventory of, 114–16, 118, 120; records of, 114, *114*, 115, 133
touch, sense of, 9, 42, 103, 126
Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain (Defoe), 194
trade, 155, 176; networks of, 1, 4
Tranquebar, 168
travel narratives, 48, 74, 196; European, 51, 151; as historical source, 4, 28
Treaty of Amritsar, 214
tree barks as dyes, 159
trousers, 92, 94, 99; pajama, 35, 98
tulips, 208
turbans, 31, 45, 48, 56, 64, 75, 92, *93*, 98, 123, 129, 130, *191*, 225n37; as gifts, 71, 78, 102; of *lahariyā* textiles, 119, *119*
Turki language, 111
Turks, 112
turmeric, as dye, 19, 69, 118, 159
tusar. See *tasar* silk
Tusi, Nasir al-Din, *Akhlāq-i Nāsirī*, 51
tūs shawls, 44, 45, 64
twill weave, *34*, *47*, *201*, *204*, 237n76

U

Udaipur, 117. *See also* Mewar
Ulfati Sawaji, 177; *Rawā'ih Gulshan-i Qutbshāhī*, 155
ultā parda, 101
undergarments, 48, 55. *See also* shifts
United States, 113, 212, 213, 214
urbanism, visual culture and, 176–82
ustād rangrez (master dyer), 28. *See also* Ramdas Rangrez, Ustād
Uzbek khanates, 11, 39

V

Vali, 180
valuation of cotton cloth, 14–15
Van Dyck, Anthony, portraits by, 190, *190*, *191*
Varadarajan, Lotika, 227n73
varnak, *varnaka*, 60, 112, 226n8; Gujarati, 35–36, 50, 65, 69, 119, 232n92; as literary mode, 29, 36, 117–18
Varna Ratnākara (Jyotirīsvara), 29, 30
veils, 64, 74, 85, 100, 123, 228n165
velvet, 9, 22, 32–33, 44, 48, 83–84, 112, 123, 178, 190, 199; of Europe, 31, 232n66; of Iran, 83, *137*; of Yazd, 48; silk, 45, 69, *135*, *137*
Venice, 176
Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie. *See* VOC
Victoria and Albert Museum, 10, 141; appliquéd kalamkari bed hanging in, 185, *186–87*, *188*, 197; crewelwork bed hanging in, 202; large-scale painted cotton cloth in, 176, 180–81, 182; wall hangings in, *164*, 165
Vidyasoma Muni, *Jimanvār Paridhān Vidhi*, 36–37
Vijayanagara kings, 55–56
Vikram Samvat dating system, 114
Virabhadra Temple (Lepakshi), 168, 181

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, appliquéd kalamkari panel in, *199*, 199–200, *200*
visual culture, 1, 10, 177
VOC (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie) (Dutch East India Company), 156, 157, 173, 177, 182, 196; artisans and, 162, 163
Vrindavan, 147
"*Vrindāvanī Vastra*," *33*

W
Wagoner, Phillip, 51, 55, 235n127
Walker, Daniel, 232n94
wall hangings and canopies, *4*, 9–12, *33*, 106–7, 142, 146, *168*, *169*, *180*, 195, 202; in Amber's collections, 113, 144–145; artisans' movements represented in, *164*, *165*; in Brooklyn Museum, 1, *2–3*, *4*, *5*, 224n1
Warangal, 177, 235n127
warp, 83, *84*, 86, *142*, 207
washers, 162, 166. See also *dhobī*
*watan-jāgīr*s (hereditary territories), 110
water quality, 155, 161, 163, 211; Machilipatnam cloth and, 151, 154
Watson, John Forbes, 213
Watt, George, 209
wax, in kalamkari production process, 158, 159
wax-resist patterning, of Gujarati painted cotton textiles, *166*, 166–67, *167*
wazīr (vizier), 31
weavers, 14, 20, 35, 44, 69, 123, 162, 166, 172, 194, 230n61; master, 65, 83, 158; migratory, 163, 212; Safavid, 82, 155
weaving, weaves, 28, 33, 47, 66, 137, 143, 148, 157, 230n75; compound, *34*; double interlock twill tapestry, *47*; of figural textiles, 82–86; Kabir and, 20, *21*; lampas, 33, *33*, *34*, 230n75; plain, *4*, *113*, *140*, 230n75; process of, 83–84; of satin, *35*, *89*; taqueté, 230n75; techniques of, 10, 47. *See also names of specific weave structures*
Weddigen, Tristan, 16
weft, 83, 86, *142*, 207
Wendt, Ian, 158
West Asia, 25
white, whiteness, 129, 135, 139, 144, 158–59, 176, 190, 199, 209; of cotton cloth, 50–51, 60, 90, 115, 126–27, 141, 159–60, 166–68, 175, 207, 212, 215, 236n27; of cotton garments, 19, 35, 48, 51–52, 55–56, 59–61, 64, 66, 85, 92, 98, 123, 137, 139, 185, 189; of silk, 39, 41
Whitney, Eli, 237n10
William and Mary, 188, 208; chintz and, 194–95
William III, King, 188, 194, 208
wimples, 85
Windsor Castle, textiles in, 201, 209
women, 76, 85, 88, 126, 178, 197; in Amber Palace, 31, 134; as consumers, 25, 195; depicted in textiles, 128, 135, *135*, *136*, 137, 149, *180*, 181, *181*; depictions of bodies of, 59, 190, *190*; as embroiderers, 24, 188, 204; European, 185, 196; garments of, 1, 19, 48, 56, 59, 123; hierarchy of, 127–28
wool and woolens, 36, 42, 48, 115, 194; carpets of, 17, 142, 212; crewelwork embroidery threads of, 197, 201; pashmina, 37, 214; religious dimensions of, 45, 51
Woudstra, Jan, 207, 208

Y
Yamuna River, 28
yarn, 207
Yazd: brocaded silks from, 31; velvet from, 33, 48, 83, 232n66
yellow dyes, 158
*yoginī*s and yogis, 16, 96, 126
Yusuf Khan, 77

Z
zabād, scent of, 29
Zain Khan Koka, 48, *48*, *49*
zanāna, 133, 134, 144
zarbaft (cloth woven with gold thread or strips), 31; as term, 32
zardozī embroidery (embellishment with gold and silver thread or strips), 64, 178
zarī (gold or silver thread or strips), 123
Zayn al-ʿAbidin, Sultan (ruler of Kashmir), 44
Zoroastrianism, 85, 181

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